

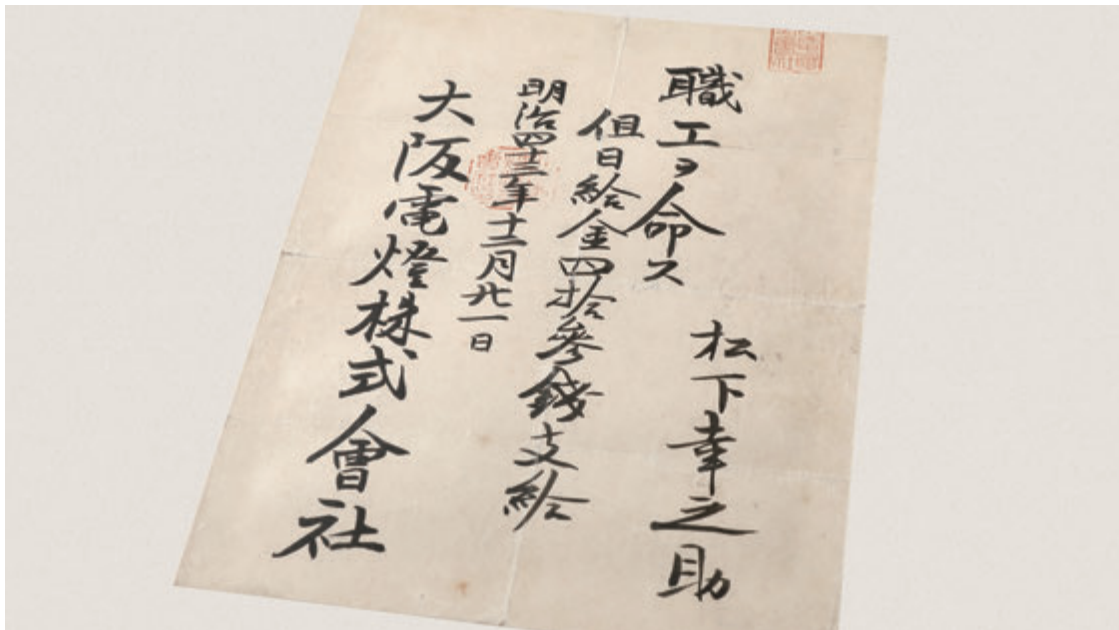
# Stories behind Panasonic History

Here, we share the founder's thoughts and relevant stories available in our company's historical records.

Episode 04

## Notice of Employment from Osaka Electric Light Company

In 1910, in anticipation of the beginning of the era of electricity, the founder joined the Osaka Electric Light Company (currently Kansai Electric Power Company) at age 15. He worked hard and distinguished himself, leading a fulfilling professional life through engaging in such work as the wiring for Osaka's iconic Tsutenkaku Tower, which was built in 1912 and modeled after the Eiffel Tower. Later, he was promoted to inspector at age 22, the youngest person to attain such a position within the company at the time. The founder looked back on the joy this promotion gave him by stating, "I felt as if a paradise of freedom had opened up before me. To be able to decide things using one's own discretion is what makes life worth living, whether the matter is minor or important." It is safe to say that this formative experience led him to employee entrepreneurship, which he frequently talked about in later years. People find a rewarding sense of satisfaction from work, which can then become their motivation in life, only after making their own creative efforts rather than doing the work as instructed. The founder wanted Matsushita Electric employees to also feel the joy he felt at the Osaka Electric Light Company.



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Job titles and organizations referred to in this magazine are correct as of July 2023.

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Panasonic Group Magazine

# Live Your Best

Vol. 06 Jul. 2023

To be shared with family.



Special Feature

## Commit to Employee Entrepreneurship Acting as a leader to help people live their best

COVER

The employees who took part in Talking with Kusumi

(at Panasonic XC KADOMA)



Special Feature

# Commit to Employee Entrepreneurship

## Acting as a leader to help people live their best

Starting from a small workshop, our predecessors have constantly met new challenges in accordance with the Basic Business Philosophy and expanded the Panasonic Group to today's scale, toward greater contributions to society and customers with high aspirations to attain employee entrepreneurship. However, to our regret, as Yuki Kusumi, Group CEO, stated in his Foundation Day message for this year, the Panasonic Group is currently facing a situation where this spirit of the predecessors has faded away, and our company, which had kept growing since its foundation, has not grown over the past 30 years.

In order to step up our game to enhance competitiveness at top speed, it is important that we reconsider this traditional spirit, return to the basics of employee entrepreneurship, and exert all of our capabilities to create and practice better ways of reaching greater achievements. What specific mindset should we adopt in practicing employee entrepreneurship? **The Panasonic Leadership Principles (PLP)** were formulated to update the PGC\* and guide us to practice genuine employee entrepreneurship, which is the true basis of the Basic Business Philosophy, with a clear message expressing the mindset required for putting the philosophy into practice.

Each of us must constantly think about what's most important about our job, and its essence, while evaluating our daily tasks against the PLP. This will allow us to practice employee entrepreneurship and contribute to the growth of the Panasonic Group.

\*Panasonic Global Competency

The founder said that even a small task could facilitate new discoveries and stimulate our ingenuity when we regard it as running a business. Here, we relate the story of a noodle shop, which he told employees as part of his speech at the Annual Management Policy Meeting in 1963.

*A noodle wagon owner must have the mindset to sell noodle dishes, on their own initiative, set up a riverside stand to appeal to potential customers, and taste the food they cooked to check the results. It is crucial to value customer feedback by asking the day's first customers whether the broth tastes good and the noodles are served warm enough. The owner can build up confidence by hearing the customers praise the food, thus becoming able to do an even better job.*

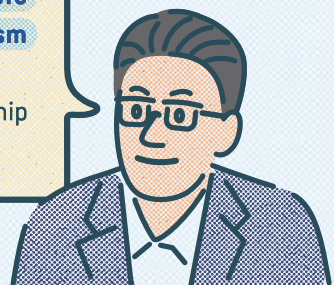


For more information, scan here / Panasonic Archives (Japanese only) ►



The PLP is part and parcel of the Basic Business Philosophy and must be incorporated into it, rather than merely co-existing with it. **If the Basic Business Philosophy is the macrocosm, the PLP is the microcosm that we should each internalize.**

I have great hopes in your efforts to practice employee entrepreneurship and take on bold challenges toward ambitious goals.



Yuki Kusumi, Group CEO



# Panasonic Leadership Principles

## Taking Leadership to Meet New Challenges



In October 2021, the Basic Business Philosophy of the Panasonic Group was updated. To put this into practice, we have also adopted the Panasonic Leadership Principles (PLP), guidelines of conduct for each of us to keep in mind in our daily work while acting as a leader. Here, we discuss the background and application of the PLP.



## What is the PLP?

As competition among rival companies intensifies, we must be unrivaled in our work and contribute to our customers and society. Our Basic Business Philosophy provides all of the essentials to achieve this. In April 2023, the PLP was formulated as a set of guidelines for each of us to use in putting the Basic Business Philosophy into practice. While the Basic Management Objective, Company Creed, and Seven Principles, which form the Panasonic Group's core spirit, clearly state the purpose and attitude we at Panasonic must have, the PLP provides a clear and well-focused message on how we should act in our daily work to transform these ideas into action.

The 18 project members with high aspirations, recruited openly from among Group employees, discussed and drafted the guidelines, carefully choosing each word to ensure that these guidelines would always be kept in mind and applied in the workplace, and would inspire changes in employee behavior.

Descriptions of the desired conduct have avoided the use of vague expressions because the project team tried to develop messages that are as clear and well-focused as possible. The PLP is not something to be memorized but a set of principles intended to encourage tangible changes in each

employee's daily conduct. First, each of us should use the PLP as a basis for reflecting on our actions and decisions in our daily work. Moving forward, "level standards" will be provided for each job position to identify specific conduct expected for each PLP principle, allowing the PLP to be used in human resources management systems such as hiring, training, and performance evaluation. It is important for us to have a good understanding of these standards in working to improve the level of employee conduct in accordance with the PLP.



## The 11 principles in business-card size PLP Pocket Card

Please cut out the card along the dotted lines. Staple the left end, and then you can keep it as a booklet. You can also choose a few principles that are particularly important to you and carry them with your business cards or ID card, or place them on your desk. Keep the PLP handy and put it into practice in your daily work.

\*The principles are arranged in the proper sequence when they are bound into a mini booklet.



## Panasonic Leadership Principles

As individuals brought together by the Panasonic Group, regardless of whether or not we are managers responsible for a team, each of us shall provide leadership and contribute to efforts to use the collective wisdom of all individuals toward the realization of an ideal society with richness both in matter and mind.

To this end, we will continuously review and improve the Panasonic Leadership Principles that serve as our guidance for acting accordingly every day throughout the Panasonic Group.

### Drives Vision

Without being bound by the status quo, we shall boldly envision our ideal future beyond the imagination of others around us. Even if it seems difficult, we will never give up and work toward the achievement of an ideal future while exploring all the possibilities.

— 2 —

### Strategic Thinking and Behavior

We shall detect signs of change without being preoccupied with the matters at hand, thereby seeing the big picture of society and thinking flexibly. We will not make rash decisions or take a short-sighted approach such as thinking about actions to be taken based on the status quo, and will always promote and practice mid- to long-term thinking. We will open up new business opportunities by always taking interest in social and technological progress and by evaluating and honing our skills, which will serve as our strengths in an endeavor to keep ahead of changes.

— 4 —

### Ownership

No matter how menial our tasks may seem, we will be aware that we are the managers of our own jobs and act accordingly. We will find meaning in each task and never say, "That's not my job." We will continue to act with a sense of autonomy for our happiness and that of the organization as well as the well-being of all individuals concerned.

— 6 —

### Harmonizes Wisdom

In order to create more wisdom, we shall listen to other parties' opinions with an open mind and say what needs to be said with respect for them. We will promote rapid and optimal decision-making without fear of disagreement with others.

— 8 —

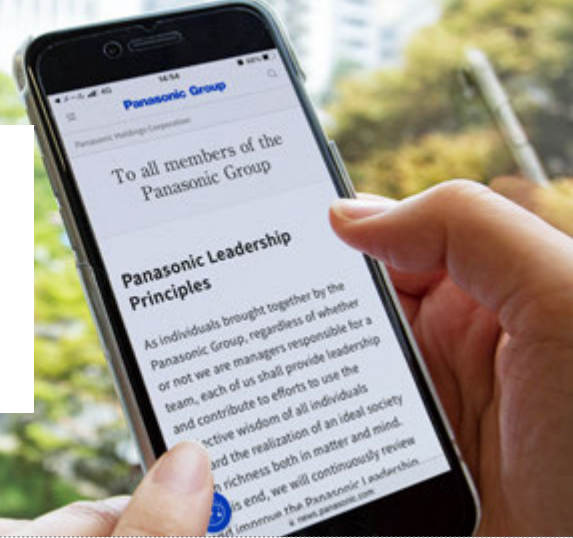
### People First

We shall explore and achieve an ideal state through daily practice and humble reflection. We will not force our opinions and methods on team members, but believe in their potential and fully trust them to do a job. When performing tasks, we will make it a top priority to ensure the health and safety of ourselves and team members. We will look after and help each other to establish a pleasant work environment for all team members.

— 10 —

# Check the PLP on Your Smartphone

Please bookmark the PLP page so that you can reflect on your mindset and actions at any time.



## Builds Trust

With the awareness that we are members of society, we will gain trust by acting in good faith without arrogance. We shall not neglect even the smallest details and always do what is right for society in mind. Moreover, we will humbly learn from all affiliates, cooperate with them, and enhance each other through respectful dialogue, aiming to achieve social progress.

— 3 —

## Evolution

We will not depend on our current capabilities and experience, but will continue to expand our horizons, learn, and change. Instead of being bound by convention and making excuses about why we cannot pursue these objectives, we will explore ways to achieve them. We will become challengers rather than bystanders or critics and support the challenges of others around us.

— 7 —

## Drives Results

We shall be keenly aware of our roles and missions, and always confirm the goal to be achieved and the degree to which we have realized it. We will never overlook our behavior when it runs counter to our achievement. No matter how difficult the challenge we face, we will fearlessly take prompt action to ensure the achievement of results.

— 11 —

## Customer Focus

We shall always think from a customer's perspective. In order to keep customers happy, we will deeply understand the potential problems that they have yet to identify, look ahead to their ideal future, and continue to take actions that far exceed their expectations.

— 1 —

## Best Work Processes

Without being satisfied with the status quo, we shall promote the visible measurement of productivity in all situations, thoroughly pursue such an effort, and achieve results, which will always make us proud that our work offers the world's best quality. To this end, we will consider the status quo as a decline and continue to boldly improve any unsatisfactory work processes without hesitation.

— 5 —

## Welcomes Uniqueness and Differences

We shall consider differences as strengths, and welcome diversity and use it to our advantage to create new value. We will become aware of our preconceptions and biased views and promote fair decision-making independent of such ways of thinking.

— 9 —



## How does the PLP differ from the Basic Business Philosophy, Basic Management Objective, Company Creed, and Seven Principles?



**Basic Management Objective:** The purpose of the Panasonic Group's business and its mission  
**Company Creed and Seven Principles:** Our attitude toward the way we conduct our work on a daily basis as employees of the Panasonic Group  
**Basic Business Philosophy:** The mindset that the employees of the Panasonic Group must follow in their work and in the management of the company  
**PLP:** Guidelines of conduct that each employee should use in putting the Basic Business Philosophy into practice

The Basic Management Objective, Company Creed, and Seven Principles are values that we must uphold as employees of the Panasonic Group. With these values in mind, we are expected to act in line with the PLP. This will enable us to achieve employee entrepreneurship, or in other words, to practice the Basic Business Philosophy. The PLP is part and parcel of the Basic Business Philosophy, not independent of it.



## Why does the PLP have 11 principles?



The PLP was drafted as an update to the Panasonic Global Competency (PGC), a Group-wide guideline of conduct introduced in 2016, based on the Management Philosophy.

While the PGC consisted of eight competencies, the PLP has adopted eleven after extracting elements deemed necessary for the implementation of the Basic Business Philosophy.

However, the current PLP is not in its final form. It will continue to be reviewed and improved as necessary.



## How should each operating company's own guidelines of conduct and its values relate to the PLP?



The Panasonic Group's Basic Business Philosophy forms the basis for each operating company's guidelines of conduct and values, both of which were formulated to put the Basic Business Philosophy into practice. Since the release of the PLP, efforts have been made to clarify the relationship between the PLP and individual operating companies' guidelines of conduct and values. In addition, PHD and PEX will continue to provide information, relevant content, and practical tools to help employees understand the PLP and, moreover, to create an environment where everyone can easily access and learn about the PLP.



**Shigeki Mishima**  
Group CHRO

## Keep Evolving without Fear of Change

The ideas described in the PLP are not new. Many of you may feel that the PLP reflects behaviors that you have already practiced and valued in your workplaces for many years. Everyone in the Panasonic Group is expected to continue to evolve toward their own growth and contribution to society by improving their knowledge, mindset, and behaviors without fear of change. The PLP describes concrete guidelines for our actions to achieve this.

To facilitate change, it is important to reflect upon your current mindset and actions, as well as seek feedback from those around you. We will continue to work with operating companies to provide the necessary programs and tools.





Wadhawan explaining a system to media personnel

**Solutions Unique to India through  
a Thorough Understanding of Customer Issues  
and Creative Measures**

Panasonic  
Group  
**People**

**Leading the introduction of systems into  
a dynamic market**

## Vijay Wadhawan

Director  
Systems Solutions Division  
Panasonic Life Solutions India

Vijay Wadhawan joined Panasonic in 2016. As the person in charge of the Systems Solutions Division—which handles commercial displays, TOUGHBOOK laptops, broadcasting equipment, security devices, and more—Wadhawan is focusing on the creation of strategies and the development of next-generation leaders.

Employee entrepreneurship is perhaps the foundation of our Basic Business Philosophy, calling on each of us to use all our ability to create better methods, boldly and proactively implementing them to achieve great results. In this issue of Panasonic Group People, we look at the initiatives of employees who are pouring every effort into implementing employee entrepreneurship, and how they are utilizing the Panasonic Leadership Principles (PLP).

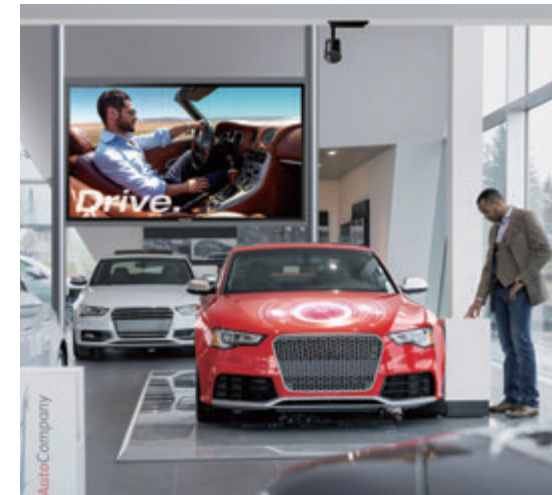
The systems market in India is constantly evolving, and more and more B2B customers are requesting unique customized solutions. I'm in charge of the system solutions business, and to date I have focused on placing trust in my staff and delegating authority to them so that I can develop leaders who promote employee entrepreneurship.

In addition to boosting profit, all employees here are

concentrating their efforts on solving our customers' issues and developing technologies that can drive the business forward. While taking note of customer requirements and the gap between their ideals and reality, we are working from the ground up to develop unprecedented solutions. At the same time, we are prioritizing the use of open-source software, the development of customizable solutions, the

use of OEM/ODM\*1 parts, and significant reductions in production and development costs. By developing a culture that strives for innovation and boosting employees' motivation and sense of responsibility, we have been able to speed up the decision-making process and enhance our competitive advantage.

A leading example of one of our solutions is Digital SignEdge (SDN), which is ideal for outdoor advertising. Making full use of ODM displays and content management systems, for example, SDN uses the cloud to update, schedule, and broadcast different content in various formats. Combining hardware and software in the optimal manner, this unparalleled solution has established itself at the top of the industry in India and has contributed to increased earnings. One car manufacturer has installed more than 14,000 units across approximately 1,800 of its dealerships across the country. By entrusting communications to the system, these dealerships have been able to



An SDN installed at a car dealer.

focus on sales and improve their operational efficiency. SDN has already been rolled out in Malaysia and we are looking at extending the system to other countries, too. We have also developed ProMeet, a wireless collaboration solution\*2; All-in One USB Meeting Cameras, for use in an array of meetings and assemblies; and a customer waiting list system.



Wadhawan at a TOUGHBOOK announcement.

Contributing to society with outstanding solutions, delegating authority to teams and their employees, bringing together our comprehensive strengths to find solutions to customer issues, and creating unique solutions to cater to a dynamic, ever-evolving market—the direction we are taking at the Systems Solutions Division is consistent with the PLP.

To me, Panasonic has a strong future as an organization that can respond to various technological requirements. In line with this, it is essential that we evolve into a total solutions provider that covers hardware, software, and services. If we can do so, I have no doubt that all industries dealing with products will uncover new strategies in line with the so-called blue ocean strategy.\*3

\*1 Original Equipment Manufacturer/Original Design Manufacturer: An OEM designs and produces products for other manufacturers. An OEM produces products under the client's design and brand.

\*2 A solution that uses wireless technology to display and share content on large screens.

\*3 A blue ocean strategy involves the creation of an entirely new market and the expansion of business into new areas.



## Transforming the Product Development Process to Rapidly Create Essential Value

Leader of ME for Rice Cookers that bring smiles to the table

### Yusuke Nii

Manager, Integrated Value Creation Section  
Cooker & Small Kitchen Appliances Engineering Department  
Cooking Business Unit, Kitchen Appliances Business Division  
Living Appliances and Solutions Company  
Panasonic Corporation

After moving from Sharp Corporation, where he was a project manager for small LCD devices, to Panasonic in 2016, Yusuke Nii drove a development project for cooking appliances until July 2023, when he was transferred to his current position. He is now working to develop and commercialize core technologies that contribute to the market competitiveness of cooking appliances by adding both essential and new values to them.

In October 2021, Panasonic Corporation's Living Appliances and Solutions Company transformed its product development process from a waterfall to a project style, and it launched the Micro Enterprise (ME) system, which enables rapid development of essential value for our customers.

As the ME leader for rice cookers, I lead my project team, which consists of people from various job functions, to achieve medium- to long-term business growth. Through our research, we have determined that the essential value that consumers expect from a rice cooker is the ability to cook rice easily and deliciously. Therefore, we have developed core technologies that make this value a reality and established an entirely new cooking technique. This new technology from our ME will be incorporated in the mass production design and commercialized by 2025.

The advantage of the ME system is the flat relationship among leaders and members, as well as an open culture that encourages better and faster communication. The perspective of other ME leaders from outside our own ME is very helpful in making us aware of our weaknesses. Bringing the expertise I gained through the ME system back to the business division, in July I assumed responsibility for a new organization dedicated to the advanced development



of a variety of core technologies. Leading a project team representing all job functions from the engineering departments, I promote the accumulation of technologies from the prototype stage of core technologies for their rapid commercialization in a year or two.

My motto is "Do the right thing," and I truly identify with the idea of Builds Trust as stated in the PLP. Good relationships, communication, and building trust form the foundation of all the business we do. In addition, Ownership and Evolution are critical elements for leaders. Team leaders and organizational heads need to do their jobs with the mindset of a manager responsible for their own work, and they need to keep evolving themselves. With this foundation, we must undertake Drives Vision and enhance Customer Focus to identify the essential values that customers really want. We then need to transform our vision into a roadmap through Strategic Thinking and Behavior and put it into practice through Best Work Processes. As we work on this as a team, Harmonizes Wisdom, Welcomes Uniqueness and Differences, People First, and Drives

ME leaders from the Living Appliances and Solutions Company gathered and had a friendly chat before the interviews and photo shoots.



## Think through with a customer-focused approach!

We asked ME leaders to share their enthusiasm for the project.



### Kenji Terai

ME for Clothes Dryers

Together with my team members, I have taken on challenging product development projects. We will commercialize this groundbreaking product no matter what it takes!



### Motonobu Shigeto

ME for Vacuum Cleaners

Toward helping customers easily create spaces that feel comfortable, I will make contributions by developing products that offer new, unrivaled value.



### Toru Miyashiro

ME for Refrigerators

I challenged myself to transform our own norms and preconceptions. We will create new value, rather than home appliances, with a focus on food.



### Naoki Hiromatsu

ME for Dishwashers

In order to achieve further penetration of dishwashers in Japan, we will reassess the conventional wisdom with an open mind to create and establish distinctive value that enables us to always stay close to customers' lives.



### Yohei Kitamura

ME for Microwave Ovens

We will challenge ourselves to create new and unprecedented value to achieve our aim of "Energizing everyday dietary life."



### Yuji Yamamoto

ME for Induction Hobs

To enable Panasonic's induction hobs to earn customers' continued support and achieve further growth, I will create future staple products that bring us profits.



### Yuki Yoda

ME for Oral Care Products

Oral hygiene is crucial for extending our life span and improving our quality of life. We will create solutions for basic problems, specifically, the invisibility of plaque and difficulties in brushing our teeth properly.



### Toshihiro Takeuchi

ME for Hair Care

I will help fulfill consumers' wish to straighten their hair as well as address their concerns about hair damage to establish Panasonic's presence in the global hair care industry.



### Keitaro Amari

ME for Gel Nail Solutions

Nails are parts of our body that come into view tens or hundreds of times a day. We will create the world's first product that can easily remove gel nails and encourage people to enjoy the moment in everyday life.

Results have paramount importance. Viewed in this way, I was able to understand that the PLP is the very process of product development and value creation.

We want to develop appropriate core technologies so that we can create the technology-based essential value of rice cookers. A family table filled with delicious food is

full of smiles. In this sense, cooking appliances can help people live their best. This motivates me as an engineer and is the source of my passion for creating value. I will strive to develop people and my team, and work with them to create products that make enthusiastic fans of Panasonic.

## Establishing expertise in the ME system as a permanent value within the business division

### Kenji Okamoto

General Manager  
Cooker & Small Kitchen Appliances Engineering Department  
Cooking Business Unit, Kitchen Appliances Business Division  
Living Appliances and Solutions Company, Panasonic Corporation

Our first attempt at introducing the ME system represented a new step in the cooking appliance business. In order to achieve the intrinsic value sought by customers, our team, led by Mr. Nii, is making progress through our solidarity and trial-and-error efforts. In May, a new organization was established within the business division, tasked with disseminating expertise in the ME system as a permanent value. This work began in earnest from July, with Mr. Nii as manager. We will work together to transform the product development process through this organization.







Umemura explaining changes in the digital camera market using a graph he created with the automatic management indicator analysis macro (a tool that automates tasks in MS Excel) he developed.

**Aligning the Thoughts of Management and Employees  
and Reinforcing the Competitiveness  
of the Digital Camera Business**

**A key individual in business and cultural reform**

**Issei Umemura**

Business Strategy Section  
Business Planning Department  
Imaging Business Unit  
Panasonic Entertainment & Communication Co., Ltd.

Issei Umemura joined Panasonic Corporation in 2019, and was assigned to the Appliances Company's Imaging Business Unit within the Smart Life Network Business Division. After working on product planning for the LUMIX camera series, he took up his current role in April 2020.

I work in business planning for the digital camera business, where I'm involved in the formulation of management policies and the examination of medium-term management plans. At the same time, since FY22 I've been responsible for all aspects of planning and management of the Smart Forum, an important event held six or seven times a year to help employees take ownership of our business strategies.

With the nature of the event changing with its switch to an online format following the pandemic, we also decided to rethink the name. And so what was previously called the General Meeting was renamed the Smart Forum in November 2022. I thought the name change was symbolic of the business unit's intent to implement business and cultural reform.

In my role in charge of the forum, in addition to emphasizing interactive communication in line with the wishes of the business unit director, I also strive to make sure that the forum's content is catered to employees' interests, which I gauge through post-event questionnaires and feedback from my colleagues. For example, part of this year's management policy is to further grow our new businesses, and through the questionnaire we discovered that employees wanted more specific information on this growth project. In the next forum, the business unit director talked about his current thoughts on the project, and I made sure that participants could interact with the content. I'm in charge of everything from planning and filming to editing and broadcasting. I didn't have any skills in filming and editing beforehand, and so I learned and remembered the methods from scratch.

We also have a new section called Project L in which we have engineers talk about the secrets behind their product development projects. By enhancing employees' knowledge of products from their own departments, the idea is to boost unity within the business unit and increase the motivation of our engineers. In the post-event questionnaires, we include a section to quantitatively assess how satisfied employees have been with the event, and we have maintained our target of more than 95%. I'm always looking to incorporate new elements into the event, and so it might be that my efforts are paying off.

After the announcement of the Panasonic Leadership Principles, I examined whether my work was in step with the Customer Focus principle. I also fully agree with the Evolution principle, which calls on us to continue to expand our horizons, learn, and change. Soon after I took on my current role, my boss said that he wanted to automate the collection of the huge amount of data required for the formulation of our business plans. While thinking that the request was somewhat unreasonable, I nonetheless proactively agreed to give it a go. We succeeded, however, and as a result we were able to automate the analysis of



Umemura editing a video for the Smart Forum in June.

management indicators and drastically reduce the time we spent on the collection of data. We were then able to use the time we gained on more important data analysis. Just as I learned how to aggregate data and edit videos, rather than looking for reasons you can't do something, I think it's more important to give it a go.

Our new business unit director wants us to continue proactively tackling cultural reform and improvements in operational efficiency. I have thus created an "online suggestion box" where employees can propose ways to improve employee satisfaction and drive cultural reform. I hope to be able to link these proposals to improvement activities. With the business unit director and the business planning departments leading the way, I'll do everything I can to ensure these proposals lead to improvements. This article is my commitment to helping employees live their best lives.



Umemura with a LUMIX DC-S1. "I've gotten used to using mirrorless single-lens cameras now," he says.



Talking with  
Kusumi

## Thinking about the Panasonic Leadership Principles —Implementing Employee Entrepreneurship

In this discussion, Yuki Kusumi, Group CEO, sits down with four employees involved in the formulation of the Panasonic Leadership Principles (PLP) to talk about the implementation of employee entrepreneurship and utilization of the principles.



### The ideas that went into the formulation of the PLP and customer focus: Maintain the attitude of being a humble merchant

**Kusumi:** For everyone to implement employee entrepreneurship, which is at the core of our Basic Business Philosophy, I felt the need to put down in writing a set of guidelines with a clear and well-focused message. Rather than working with several others to create these guidelines myself, I thought it would be better to solicit the ideas of

a wider range of employees. The resulting principles go far beyond my initial requests and ultimately ended up covering the essence of our Basic Business Philosophy. To me, implementing employee entrepreneurship based on these guidelines of conduct leads to the implementation of our Basic Business Philosophy itself.

My only request for the PLP Project team was that Customer Focus was the first on the list. One reason for this is written in the Basic Business Philosophy Handbook, where our former Chairman Arataro Takahashi says that implementing the philosophy means that we must be unrivaled in our work and bring customers joy. The Basic

Business Philosophy also refers to Article 15 of our Basic Internal Rules in 1935, which states, “No matter how large Matsushita Electric might become in the future, maintain the attitude of being a humble merchant. Think of yourself to be employed in a small shop. Be simple, frugal and humble as you carry out your work.” The founder stated the following three fundamental requirements for being a merchant: Understanding the meaning of commerce, Reading others’ hearts, and Being fully humble before others. Elsewhere, just recently in June we hosted the Excellent Dealer Award Program. The managing director of one of the award-winning stores said the following: “Although it is a

From left

### Michihito Sekine

Manager, Service Planning Section, CS Center  
Infotainment Systems Business Division  
Panasonic Automotive Systems Co., Ltd.

### Ayaka Nakasaka

Staff Engineer, Security Solutions Department  
Digital & AI Technology Center, Technology Division  
Panasonic Holdings Corporation

### Yuki Kusumi

Group CEO

### Daisuke Tajima (PLP Project team member)

Supervisor, Electronic Components Purchasing Department  
Procurement Operation Center, Global Procurement Division  
Panasonic Operational Excellence Co., Ltd.

### Kimiko Takayama (PLP Project team member)

Assistant Chief, Chiba Showroom  
Metropolitan Showroom Department, Sales Division  
Panasonic Housing Solutions Co., Ltd.

matter of course, the most important thing for a merchant is to make customers happy.” This young and successful director of 39 recognized that bringing joy to the customer is an essential and natural part of business. This helped me to once again realize the importance of remembering that our focus is the customer.

### Understanding the nature of current problems and predicting problems of the future

**Takayama:** I run the showroom that I am in charge of as if it is my own. With the mindset of a manager, I ensure neat arrangements and cleanliness for customers who visit, and I’m always working to improve our advisors’ product expertise and ability to deal with customers.

**Kusumi:** Our showrooms are experts at proposing solutions to customers’ desires and needs. As a result, our showrooms really make customers happy. In this sense, you are outstanding Customer Focus practitioners.

**Nakasaka:** My role is the applied development of blockchain technologies to manage data on and create value from our environmental achievements, be it our level of





## Envisaging the Ideal Future for Customers and Developing Technologies to Tackle Global Environmental Issues

**Ayaka Nakasaka**  
Nakasaka is in charge of applied development of blockchain technologies, which use encryption technology to accurately maintain and link data history in a chain. She is currently investigating their application in mobility, healthcare, and environmental fields, as well as planning and developing prototypes. The photo shows Nakasaka testing an electric bike sharing service.



contribution to CO<sub>2</sub> reductions or recycling of resources. Our aim is to build a society in which we can trade value that stems from environmental contributions. I don't have the opportunity to directly interact with customers, however, while the technologies we develop take time to become a part of society and people's lives. While looking at social changes and trends among our competitors, our focus is on the creation of patents. The Customer Focus principle states that we should look ahead to customers' ideal futures, and I believe it is important to supply the technologies we develop for the optimal scenario, at the optimal timing, and at the optimal price. Intellectual property is therefore essential, and can ensure maximum use of the resources generated by the Group.

**Kusumi:** In your line of work, there are many similar blockchain technologies. I think the most important thing for you is to consider how you can apply and utilize the blockchain technologies in an unrivaled manner. Doing so will ensure your solutions are chosen by our customers.

**Nakasaka:** Thank you.

**Kusumi:** Regardless of whether you directly interact with customers or not, one of the founder's requirements for being a merchant is the ability to read others' hearts. But this doesn't simply mean to understand what they think. One interpretation could be understanding the essence of their problems. If we are looking to the future, it could mean predicting changes in society, among customers, and their issues, and envisaging ways to make them happy. At the same time, it's essential to consider how we make customers happier than they are with other companies. It's important that everyone in the Group has the mindset and looks ahead to the future of our customers.

### Never be satisfied with the status quo and implement improvement after improvement

**Tajima:** I'm particularly focused on the Evolution principle. Initially, we planned to use the word Innovation, but we worried that it might call to mind the creation of something from the ground up, or something solely for younger employees. To avoid misunderstanding, we settled upon Evolution, referring to the founder's quote, "start anew every day." As per the phrase "continue to expand our horizons, learn, and change," we are emphasizing the importance of never being satisfied with the status quo. The idea is that we



should incorporate new expertise and new mindsets and use these to evolve our products and services, and evolve ourselves.

**Kusumi:** You have clearly thought it through very thoroughly. I repeatedly call upon employees to implement improvement after improvement, reform after reform, and innovation after innovation. As others around us make advances, if we don't continue to evolve and engage in unrivaled work, ultimately we will fall behind. As you say, it is important to continue to take on new challenges. Toyota promotes a Spirit of Kaizen, through which it encourages the continuous search for bottlenecks and hard work to eliminate them. While this is slightly different to Evolution, both are just as important. What they both tell us is that we should never be satisfied with the status quo and recognize that there is always room for improvement.

### Set out ambitious goals separate from your plans and strive for personal change

**Sekine:** The repair *gemba* deals in small lots, and traditionally everything has been handled manually. After spending time at the Matsumoto Plant, however, where full automation is progressing, I began to wonder whether manual work was the correct way forward. I thus worked with production engineering to automate tasks that were previously people-dependent, making small improvements wherever possible. Currently I'm prioritizing the creation of an environment in which it is easy for my employees to make improvements. I continue to engage in dialog with my employees to ensure that we can lay out ambitious goals as per the Drives Vision principle, and work backward from there and continue our Evolution.

**Kusumi:** That's very good. The reason I often talk about the importance of ambitious goals is because without them, all we do is repeat the same processes. But it's paramount to work out what is required to achieve these ambitious goals. I look forward to the creation of a culture in which employees can set out ambitious goals separate from their actual plans and constantly strive to achieve them.

**Nakasaka:** As I engage in R&D to create a society in which we can trade environmental value, I'm trying to implement improvement after improvement in my own way to improve productivity. However, as details, conditions, and the required values often change, I often worry whether I have made the

right decision. How should employees in situations similar to mine approach these decisions?

**Kusumi:** It is indeed difficult to discuss and measure productivity in R&D. In your case, rather than thinking about productivity, I think you can make forward progress when thinking about the direction of the technological development and what is required for the technology to be assimilated into society. On the other hand, development takes time, and there may be momentum swings along the way. Mistakes are possible, but it's better to quickly make those mistakes so you can proceed to the next stage. Please make mistakes with confidence.

### How we should be using the PLP

**Tajima:** I was also involved in the formulation of the Drives Results principle. This is especially important for the introduction of SCM-Navi, which is something we are

## Focusing On Creating an Environment Conducive to Improvement Where Members Can Boldly Design the Future



**Michihito Sekine**  
Sekine joined the Japan branch of Malaysia's SANYO Automedia Sdn. Bhd. mid-career. After roles in the overseas service department for car manufacturers and the domestic service department at the Matsumoto Plant, he took up his current role in 2023. The photo shows Sekine instructing one of his employees at the Matsumoto Plant's repair *gemba*.





working on at the procurement department. This system uses information technology to make MRP\*<sup>1</sup> information visible, but our ultimate objective is not simply visualization. Rather, we want to design improvement processes, enhance efficiency, and generate cash. The results I want to achieve are contributions to our operating companies and a greater competitive advantage.

**Kusumi:** Ultimately, it is people who consider and implement measures for improvement. To help them do so, in your case it's important to think about what needs to be made visible. But you must also understand that visualization is merely a means and not an objective. As you say, I feel you can make more progress by clarifying why you want to make the information visible.

## Running the Showroom as If It Is Her Own, Solving Customers' Issues, and Using Their Feedback for Medium- to Long-term Strategies



### Kimiko Takayama

After working in showrooms and sales offices in the metropolitan area, where she was in charge of modular kitchen systems and other products, Takayama assumed her current role as manager of the Chiba Showroom. The photo shows her conducting role-play training for L-CLASS KITCHEN explanations. She was involved in the formulation of three principles, including Welcomes Uniqueness and Differences.



**Takayama:** As a PLP Project team member, I initially thought it would be best to incorporate all 11 principles into our employees' basic mindset to ensure our vectors are aligned. But when speaking to other members prior to this discussion, some said that while all 11 principles are easily understood, it might be difficult to implement them all at the same time. I think one option could be to choose several which are most important to you and engage in specific action.

**Kusumi:** I completely agree. It's only natural that the nature and stage of the work will differ by employee. And so, like you say, it's a good idea to think about those that are of particular relevance to you. That said, I would like everyone to prioritize the Customer Focus principle. Moreover, we can also think of Ownership and Drives Results as the foundation of our actions. For the other principles, I think the level of importance will change depending on the person and the nature of their work. Perhaps there could be discussions between managers and their employees in which managers suggest several principles to focus on for that year, and assess how the employee's daily actions have been. I think this could help to establish the PLP in our day-to-day tasks.

## Conclusion: Individual implementation of employee entrepreneurship

**Takayama:** My day-to-day role is to solve the issues customers are currently facing. I hope to pass on the valuable feedback from our customers to product planning and manufacturing, and in turn contribute to the creation of medium- to long-term strategies.

**Tajima:** I will focus on making customers happy and ensuring that means do not become an end. As I took part in the formulation of the PLP, I'll strive to lead the way in their implementation, and ensure that they firmly take root throughout the organization.

**Nakasaka:** In my department, we are in a lucky position as we have time to consider what an ideal future for our customers looks like. To ensure that I don't become complacent when designing this future, I'll work to build relationships with other departments so that I can borrow their expertise, enhance my own expertise, and implement employee entrepreneurship.

**Sekine:** The Panasonic Leadership Principles are a robust set of guidelines,

## Ensuring IT Is Not an Objective, Designing Improvement Processes, Enhancing Efficiency, and Generating Profit



### Daisuke Tajima

Tajima is in charge of delivery management for general-use semiconductors and electronic components that are exported to operating companies' overseas factories. He is currently leading the planning and promotion of SCM-Navi, which makes procurement information from manufacturing sites visible. The photo shows him in an SCM-Navi meeting. He was also involved in the formulation of the PLP.



and I think a certain level of accountability is important if we are to establish these principles among our employees. I'll continue motivating our employees to take the principles on board.

**Kusumi:** As I mentioned at the outset, the Panasonic Leadership Principles encompass our Basic Business Philosophy. Moving forward, it will be key to adjust and better the principles in line with the changing times. I wrote this in a blog at the end of April, but I think that if the Basic Business Philosophy is the macrocosm, then the PLP is a microcosm.\*<sup>2</sup> If we incorporate the PLP into every last one of our cells, we can change our behavior, transform the relationships among Panasonic employees, and transform our relationships with customers and suppliers, and in turn ensure that the Panasonic Group gains even more trust. I look forward to each and every one of us incorporating the PLP into our daily activities. Thank you all for your time today.

**All:** Thank you.

\*<sup>2</sup> April 28 blog post: I realized that if the Basic Business Philosophy is the macrocosm, the PLP are the microcosm that we should individually have inside ourselves, and in that sense are part and parcel of the Basic Business Philosophy. So rather than co-existing, they should be incorporated into it.



\*<sup>1</sup> Material requirements planning: A method to calculate the required amount of material and determine the optimal purchase period using production plans, to enable the purchase and manufacture of the required materials, at the required time, and in the required amount.



# Individuals Create Their Own Reasons to Work And This Leads to Employee Entrepreneurship

## A Message from

### Ryuta Suzuki

Doctor of Business Administration, Graduate School of Business Administration, Kobe University

What do outside experts think of the Panasonic Group's employee entrepreneurship and the Panasonic Leadership Principles that guide this approach? Here we speak to Professor Ryuta Suzuki, a leader in the theory behind management organizations and organizational behavior, who has extensively studied the relationships between organizations and individuals.



### A magnificent, open community is key

A magnificent organization that is accepting of employee entrepreneurship is key to its implementation. Although in a large company there may be many employees who feel it is difficult to implement such an approach, if there is a close-knit community in the workplace, it is no doubt easier for employees to be themselves and showcase their ingenuity. It is important to create open communities that are free of fixed values and notions, and that constantly expose employees to new behaviors and mindsets. It is also important that there are open discussions in which employees can express their differences of opinion.

Panasonic employees are lucky to have a culture of cooperation and mutual support. On the other hand, it seems to me as though there is too much appreciation for reliability. There is a danger that in order to be reliable, people will follow precedent. The key is how to encourage people to utilize their own ideas.

One example I would like to use is that of Tamanoi Vinegar Co., Ltd. in Osaka. Two things that Tamanoi places particular importance on are cooperation and the idea that employees should never think about their limitations. In its personnel development programs, for example, the company will entrust a major project to a young employee. Even if the employee's negotiations with a client don't go as planned and they struggle, the company will make sure the employee continues and does what they think needs to be done. While of course mistakes are made, it is only when they begin to give up on a task that they come up with new ideas. By gaining this kind of experience, eventually they are able to succeed. Risks must be taken to implement employee entrepreneurship, and this is why a community that has your back and that you can turn to for advice is paramount. Communities like this can give encouragement, offer support, and enable you to give everything.

One of my favorite quotes is from *The Jungle Book* by Rudyard Kipling, in which he writes, "For the strength

Ryuta Suzuki graduated from the School of Business Administration at Kobe University in 1994. He obtained his doctorate in business administration at Kobe University in 1999. Following stints as a visiting researcher at University of North Carolina and a full-time lecturer at the School of Management and Information at the University of Shizuoka, Suzuki took up his current role as a professor at the Graduate School of Business Administration at Kobe University. His main publications include *The Organization and the Individual* (Hakuto-Shobo), *Autonomous Organizational Personnel* (JPC Publishing), and *Management of Workplace Relationships* (Yuhikaku Publishing), for which he received the 56th Nikkei Economy Book Culture Award and the 30th Academic Association for Organizational Science's Takamiya Award.



\*All publications available in Japanese only.

of the pack is the wolf, and the strength of the wolf is the pack." It is a pack that enables a wolf to develop strength, while a strong pack is full of strong wolves. The same can be said for the relationship between an individual and an organization. In other words, it is the interaction between the individual and their organization that make the company stronger.

### Care and consideration and a sense of attachment

Another important element is to develop care and consideration within the community. A community cannot be strong if it lacks care and consideration for those inside it, and it is only once this care and consideration exists that one can think about what they can do to benefit the company. For me, I don't think employee entrepreneurship is something that can be done alone. Rather, I believe it means doing what you think benefits the company alongside your colleagues.

On the other hand, for the employee to develop a sense of attachment to the organization, the organization must place value on the employee. As people, we marry or partner with those who choose and value us. In the same way, as long as the organization promotes employee entrepreneurship, it is essential that it values each and every one of its employees. In turn, the employee will develop a sense of attachment for their organization and workplace, while the sense of security that this environment offers will enable the employee to thoroughly implement employee entrepreneurship. In this sense, the organization and the individual are on an equal footing.

### Linking work, life, and the Panasonic Leadership Principles

Also key to a strong organization are a set of guidelines that show employees how to implement the relevant philosophies and policies. However, I also believe it is important that people do not simply abide by these guidelines and stop thinking independently. One of the Panasonic Leadership Principles, for example, is Customer Focus. Some might interpret this as the need to quickly respond to customers' needs, while others



might think it means to create something that satisfies the customer, even if it takes time. That is to say, as employees will implement employee entrepreneurship in their own ways and based on diverse values, it is important to recognize the diversity of their specific actions. This is why, rather than being an instruction manual or a set of rules, I believe the PLP should be a point of reference.

While the individual principles and their details look like employee declarations, it might be better to think of them as a letter from your fellow colleagues about how you should act together. Employees can then think about how to respond to and act on this letter in their own way. In other words, employees should think about what Panasonic, their job, and their well-being means to them personally, alongside the PLP. I look forward to Panasonic employees investigating what work and life means to them and taking concrete action.

Doing so will naturally lead to the implementation of employee entrepreneurship, and it is then that your close-knit workplace community becomes most important. This in turn will enable the implementation of employee entrepreneurship without fear.



# Starting Point of Employee Entrepreneurship: Grasp the Knack for Management

End of 1933 (establishment of the business division system and the Five Principles, transfer of the head office to Kadoma, Osaka, and launch of the twelfth factory)

**Busy performing dual roles**

Rapid business growth and expansion

Founder

Human resource development lags behind business expansion. Since managers are busy performing dual roles, we must promote young employees. Every employee must develop a self-reliant attitude. We need human resources who are trained as managers. Everyone must have the mindset of a manager.

During speeches given to employees

December 16, 1933

If we regard even a small task as the management of a business, then you will be able to come up with many different ideas for improvement, meanwhile making new discoveries.

December 18, 1933

I hope that non-management employees will train themselves to be ready to serve as a manager of a factory or sales office.

December 26, 1933

To enable all of you to develop your managerial talents, I will provide guidance to support your self-development.

New Year's Day, 1934

The founder delivered a slogan as his New Year's gift to all employees, including those working for business sites at distant locations.

"Grasping the Knack for Management Is Worth a Million Dollars"

Once you grasp the knack of management, you will grow. And so will the company.

What the founder wanted to convey to all employees can be summed up in "Think like a manager."

We must continue to train ourselves. We will be able to master the knack of management only by continuing this effort.

Hino thinking back on his experience: We feel great joy when we come up with a new idea; the experience is worth a million dollars.

Although the essentials of business administration can be taught, the knack of management comes through experience and discovery of one's innate skills. You should think every day, reflecting on your actions and decisions. You will find that you make fewer mistakes in judgment. At that point, you are well on your way to grasping the knack of successful business.

Awareness  
Action  
Leaping forward

Founder: Awareness triggers changes in actions. This is employee entrepreneurship. A sunao (untrapped) mind is essential.

## This is the starting point for future "employee entrepreneurship!"

Opportunities to grasp the knack of management are available to everyone in all situations!

What is the knack of management for you?

Capture the essence, the most important element of each task, and think about a better way.

Think things through and exercise your ingenuity. By doing this, your work will continuously improve.

This is the knack. However, we cannot find such knacks in textbooks since they differ depending on the work.

Yuri

# The Essence of Practicing the Basic Business Philosophy

Vol. 6

The concept of "employee entrepreneurship" may have its origins in the phrase "Grasping the knack for management is worth a million dollars." In this issue, we explore the background of these words, which the founder offered as a New Year's gift to his employees on New Year's Day in 1934.

\*See the next page for the Special Exhibition on the Management Philosophy, which focuses on this topic.



In this series, we take a close look at our brand, which serves as the bond connecting the Panasonic Group with people and society. In this issue, we introduce the Special Exhibition on the Management Philosophy held at the Konosuke Matsushita Museum, part of the Panasonic Museum, until June 30 (after which it will remain available for viewing on the intranet). The special exhibition is held twice a year on themes directly linked to the management policy of the current day. This viewpoint reveals tips on issue-solving from the corporate history, the founder's philosophies, and practical examples, with the current exhibition marking the 50th event. In order to fulfill the Panasonic Group's purpose, this time the exhibition features specific anecdotes to help each of us practice employee entrepreneurship, with a focus on what made our predecessors gain new insights and how they consequently changed themselves. Here are excerpts from the exhibition.



2023 Special Exhibition on the Management Philosophy  
**Grasping the Knack for Management Is Worth a Million Dollars**

□ Anecdote | Have a Sense of Ownership

## Eyes of a proprietor

**Are you operating this equipment effectively to make profits? Here, we introduce an anecdote of a senior associate. He became aware of the founder's stance of keeping tabs on the use of funds as a proprietor from the look in his eyes while taking him on a factory tour, and later committed himself to making business decisions from a proprietor's perspective.**

In 1977, the Refrigeration Business Division was barely making profits. Concerned about the business division's management, the founder made frequent visits to the factory, during which Akira Matsuda (later became president of Matsushita Communication Industrial) accompanied him on a factory tour as a plant superintendent. "He (the founder) listened to our presentations very attentively and responded with great enthusiasm as I explained each piece of equipment and machine."

"However, while I was giving explanations, he occasionally glanced or stared at me with a stern look on his face." According to Matsuda, the founder continued with his tour while having an occasional look at the plant superintendent. Toward the end of the tour, Matsuda realized, "I see. This is a proprietor's look. Through his eyes, the founder was communicating and confirming, 'This equipment and this machine belong to me. I paid for them. Are you properly using and maintaining them? Are you operating them effectively to remain consistently profitable?'"

Although the founder did not make these remarks, Matsuda strongly

felt his intentions. At the time, the founder was serving as executive advisor and had already withdrawn from the grind of daily management. Nonetheless, together with the manager, he was conducting onsite checks to confirm whether the funds were effectively used.

"I get it now. This is how a proprietor observes. The founder takes management as his own business. After all, we see equipment and employees as company assets. Instead, it is crucial that we face our work by seeing them as our own assets." Based on this idea, Matsuda changed his behavior accordingly. **For instance, when his subordinate brought an approval request to purchase equipment, he pulled out the actual 10,000 yen bill from his wallet, placed it on the desk to resemble the 10 million yen required to purchase the equipment, and asked them, "Would you pay this amount out of your own pocket to buy this equipment?"** "If the plan fails, then the money will be wasted. Even then, would you really be willing to purchase this equipment? If you are trying to coax the company to pay for it, then you still have a lot to learn."

Matsuda communicated his experience with the founder in the following words, **"In a way, this idea shares the same concept as the principle of employee entrepreneurship. I believe that if we consider ourselves as the owner of each of our business activities and engage in work from a president's or proprietor's perspective, then we will inevitably become serious about what we do."**



1978 Production lines in the washing machine factory

□ Anecdote | Understand the Meaning of Your Business

## Products representing Matsushita as business cards

**Batteries have supported people's lives through electricity, and their use has increased with the spread of electrical appliances. To this day, they remain the most accessible and frequently used products on a daily basis and serve as a gateway to our products. It is important that we occasionally renew our awareness of the meaning of these products, as well as the business, and incorporate it in our initiatives.**

With the aim of achieving batteries with twice the conventional performance, our company launched a project in 1960 and released National Hi-Top dry batteries in 1963. These high-power batteries could be used in a wider range of products, including shavers and calculators, which were not previously battery-operated, and further accelerated growth in demand.

After receiving the report from the Dry Battery Business Division on the completion of products, the founder immediately confirmed the product at Shinshin-an. Looking at the product with adoring eyes, he thanked the business division's efforts, "Well done. This is an excellent product." He continued by saying, "Tens of millions of batteries at a time are released and used by a number of people. **They are acting as our business cards representing Matsushita, so to speak. These business cards can make money and even advertise other Matsushita products by demonstrating high performance. We couldn't ask for a better result.** It would cost a fortune to achieve the same amount of advertising by distributing tens of millions of flyers. From this aspect, it is also Matsushita's best product."

Masao Funahashi, who was at this meeting and later became senior managing director of Matsushita Battery Industrial, looked back on this occasion in the following words, **"It is true that the sales unit prices of batteries do not amount to much. Nevertheless, their quality directly affects the company's image. I realized their critical role for the first time and felt a keen sense of mission to deliver an appreciable amount of quality batteries to the world."**

Thereafter, the business division engaged in production with due care and attention to quality, with the understanding, "Based on the assumption that we deliver batteries to customers and

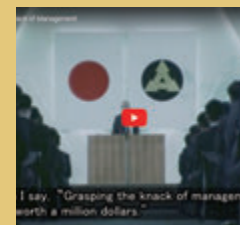


1969 Life tests of Neo Hi-Top dry batteries

affiliated retail stores as our business cards, if they are bad business cards with a quality problem, then it will immediately hurt our overall corporate image." Moreover, in order to drive higher power devices such as radio-cassette recorders, the business division promoted the further development of products and released Neo Hi-Top in 1969.

In the in-house newsletter issued in 1976, Funahashi said, "Hi-Top maintained the same design for 13 years from 1963 and Neo Hi-Top for seven years from 1969. We treasured their designs that much. In terms of prices, since we set the price of Hyper (dry batteries) to 40 yen in 1954, we did not revise it for 20 years. Instead, in factories, we have been making consecutive and painstaking efforts to achieve rationalization." Batteries have truly played a role as business cards representing the National brand.

## Founder's Thoughts: The Knack of Management



Acquiring the Knack of Management



Know What Salt Tastes Like



Learning from Failures



## Interview with Yuki Kusumi, Group CEO



All of us must practice employee entrepreneurship





Up-close View

## The Power of the Frontline

We take an up-close and personal look at the people who are supporting the Panasonic Group's growth at their own operational frontlines.

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Senior Manager, Human Resource Department, Panasonic Manufacturing Philippines Corporation

Utilizing her position as an accountant, **Roda I. Borja** initially joined the Accounting Department, working in various related roles before moving to the Human Resource Department in 2021. As HR manager, she created a program to develop personnel and improve employee engagement. Currently she is focusing on streamlining personnel processes using AI, IoT, and other technologies.



## Contributing to Employee Well-being and Social Development through Open Communication

Preparing employees for new skills development through AED training (Center: Roda).

We are focusing our efforts on keeping employees healthy both physically and mentally, and creating opportunities for them to continuously upskill. From employee opinions surveys, we have also created improvement programs based on their concerns, regularly revising and improving the plans and monitoring the relevant KPIs. In addition to creating platforms for different generations of our workforce to interact with one another to improve communication, I pay close attention when interacting with employees and their personal issues. Having an open line of communication with them enables me to understand their working environment and tackle their concerns before they become bigger issues. For new employees, we provide opportunities for them to learn, talk about, and implement our Basic Business Philosophy. We have also formulated steps to ensure all employees can learn how to use an AED. As a company, we don't just want to protect our employees' lives, we want to increase the number of Panasonic advocates inside and outside the company through fostering human resources with skills useful to society. Moving forward, alongside work-life balance I will promote training programs to maximize the potential of each employee, and in doing so develop personnel who can contribute to society.



I love reading books while drinking coffee. It helps me to relax and enriches the mind. For me, books lead to new discoveries and realizations.

## Co-creating Better Spaces with Customers and Transforming Notions about Bathrooms in Japan



The Reboot Space is a showroom at the company's Kasugai site in Aichi Prefecture. As its name suggests, it is a place where employees can reboot their mind and body to ensure they can welcome customers with a fresh approach.

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OEM Sales Section, Special Sales Department, Japanese Market Business Unit Residential System Equipment Business Division Heating & Ventilation A/C Company, Panasonic Corporation

Since joining Panasonic Ecology Systems Co., Ltd. in 2018, **Takuya Miyata** has consistently been involved in OEM sales. Currently, he is in charge of sales and product planning for bathroom ventilation/drying systems for bathroom manufacturers.



On days off, my wife and I unwind by traveling and enjoying art. Extraordinary experiences can lead to new realizations and learnings, and in turn new energy. I love eating delicious food and relaxing in hot springs when on holiday, too.

I'm working on the development of novel bathroom ventilation/drying systems that combine air quality and air conditioning. All my customers are industry leaders, and together they account for around 60% to 70% of the domestic market. If adopted by these manufacturers, the new products I'm developing will transform common notions about bathrooms in Japan, and so it is an incredibly rewarding project. One of my strengths is organizing and communicating my thoughts and ensuring they are acted upon. I also work hard to ensure that the value we can provide is in line with customer requests and consumer needs. At the Heating & Ventilation A/C Company, our aim is to "vitalize the future with air." By working with our customers to create better spaces unique to Panasonic and eliminating inconveniences surrounding bathroom cleaning and summer humidity, I hope to be able to help provide better health and comfort for people in order for them to live one's best. While it is easy to talk about ideals, it is at the *gemba* where obstacles appear. I will strive to overcome these obstacles by utilizing the collective wisdom of those inside and outside the company.



# Meet The Athletes

— Know, Learn, Connect —

In the Meet the Athletes series, Panasonic employees interview Panasonic athletes. In this sixth edition we hear from Narumi Ishida of the Electric Works Company, who plays on the nine-a-side women's volleyball team, the Panasonic Bluebells. This year the team won two major season trophies and engaged in various social contribution activities. It was recognized for its improvement of the company's corporate image and awarded the Groupwide Award. Here we find out about the secrets to Ishida's winning ways and how she always keeps positive to drive the team forward.

## Generating Emotional Benefits for All Employees by Providing Encouragement and Excitement



Interviewer

**Nanako Mimura**

Panasonic Employee Cooperative Society Inc.

Panasonic Bluebells

**Narumi Ishida**

Lighting Business Division

Electric Works Company

Panasonic Corporation



Official team website  
(Japanese only)



Twitter

## Individual Responsibility and Victory as a Team

**Mimura:** This year the Bluebells won its eighth straight V9 Champ League title. What is the secret behind your winning streak?

**Ishida:** I don't think there is any real secret, but every year we get together with coach Atsushi Sasaki to talk about what is required to win. I think it is the sense of responsibility among the team and our hard work in daily training that has helped us win successive league titles.

**Mimura:** Last season saw six players leave the team. With such significant changes in team dynamics, have you had any transformation in your mindset or role?

**Ishida:** This year I'm trying a new role as both a receiver and a spiker, a key position that functions as the axis of the team. If I fail, the team fails, and so I'm trying to improve my ability to bring stability and security to the team by working harder in training than ever before.

**Mimura:** A role that determines the success of the team surely comes with pressure. It must be easy to fall into a negative mindset and worry about what would happen if you made a mistake...

**Ishida:** I do feel pressure and a sense of responsibility, but thinking too much about it won't improve the way I play, and so I try to think of everything in a positive light. When I'm not playing well, I practice by myself until I get better. That said, I feel down when I'm alone, so I like to be with others and talk about different things. I try to



## Interviewer's Voice

It seems to me that it is Ms. Ishida's positive approach that allows her to play in a way that inspires others. As an employee of the Employee Cooperative Society, I will strive to take a more positive approach in my work to support employees' lives and in turn be a positive influence on those around me. (Mimura)

put a positive spin on everything and then move onto the next challenge.

## Aligning the Team's Vectors through Mutual Communication, Understanding, and Support

**Mimura:** What do you think is important to create a close-knit team?

**Ishida:** The key thing is that everyone is moving in the same direction. We live in a dormitory, and so whether it's volleyball or life outside, we share both the good and bad on a daily basis. Understanding and supporting one another is helping to improve the unity of the team.

**Mimura:** Is there anything you place particular importance on during a game?

**Ishida:** The new Bluebells team lacks stability, and mistakes can lead to a negative team atmosphere which in turn causes the team to struggle. This is why I consciously play with a smile on the court and make sure we all take time to keep calm.

**Mimura:** Through its success in games and volleyball classes, for example, the Panasonic Bluebells are helping to improve our corporate image. At the Employee Cooperative Society, we engage in various activities so that employees are proud to work for the Panasonic Group, making sure they are happy by giving them peace of mind in their daily lives, and so I can see some similarities in what we do.

**Ishida:** It is thanks to the understanding and support of our companies and workplaces that we are able to continue doing what we do. Although we can't directly generate profit through volleyball, what we can do is repay everyone with positive results. I hope that we can benefit our employees in other ways by giving them courage and excitement through our hard work and success.



This photo is from a workplace party we held to celebrate the Bluebells' eighth consecutive title. It was a really enjoyable, fulfilling occasion and I could again feel the warm support of everyone at Panasonic.



2022 V9 Champ League Final  
(YouTube)



Here, we present a selection of topics from the Panasonic Group Intranet Site (PIW).

Details are available on the PIW.  
<https://iweb.is.jp.panasonic.com/gp/piw/en/>

You can use your personal smartphones to access the websites linked through the QR codes. URLs with the \* mark are for the intranet site.

## Communicating Sustainability

Expressing Purpose and Value Across Countries and Cultures



### Communicating Sustainability: Expressing Purpose and Value across Countries and Cultures



Sustainability is vital for corporate success, and companies worldwide are striving to incorporate sustainable practices in their operations. Panasonic Newsroom Global sat down with six brand and marketing representatives from across our global organization, asking them to share their strategies for and experiences with advancing sustainability and enhancing brand value within their regions.

### Panasonic in Numbers: Global Employees

Konosuke Matsushita founded Matsushita Electric Housewares Manufacturing Works with a team of three in a modest two-story house in 1918. Delivering high-quality, competitively priced products, Matsushita's workforce would grow to 20 people by the end of that year.

Today, Panasonic has evolved into an international group with a global workforce numbering 233,391 people as of March 2023.



### Interview with Kusumi, Group CEO: From Enhancing Competitiveness to "Shifting to a Growth Phase"

Yuki Kusumi, Group CEO, introduced the company's medium- to long-term vision and strategy at the Panasonic Group Strategy Briefing in May 2023. These articles introduce his thoughts on the past two years of enhancing competitiveness, the progress of Panasonic GREEN IMPACT, his strategy for investment in key growth areas, and the outlook for the Group's business portfolio.



### Applying the Founder's Wisdom at Work in North America: My Favorite Founder's Words Campaign #3

Panasonic launched the third installment of its "My Favorite Founder's Words Campaign" on Instagram, hoping to share Konosuke Matsushita's Words of Wisdom with the next generation. Fifteen employees from Panasonic Corporation of North America (PNA) share their favorite founder quotes and personal stories explaining how his words continue to inspire and resonate with them.



### Kusumi Takes His First Business Trip to China as Group CEO

From June 1 to 3, Yuki Kusumi, Group CEO, travelled to China for the first time after assuming his current post and visited operating sites in Hangzhou, Wuxi, and Yixing. His activities in China during those two days, accompanied by Tetsuro Homma, Group Regional Head for China & Northeast Asia, are introduced in a video digest (Chinese).

<https://iweb.is.jp.panasonic.com/gp/piw/newsroom/zh/report/19004.html> \*

### Deal Signed for the Supply of the "Astrova" In-Flight Entertainment System

Panasonic Avionics Corporation, under the umbrella of Panasonic Connect Co., Ltd., signed agreements with Qatar Airways, United Airlines, and Saudia Airlines to install the "Astrova" in-flight entertainment system. This will enable us to offer Panasonic's exclusive features, such as 4K OLED screens, Bluetooth audio connections, and LED mood lighting.



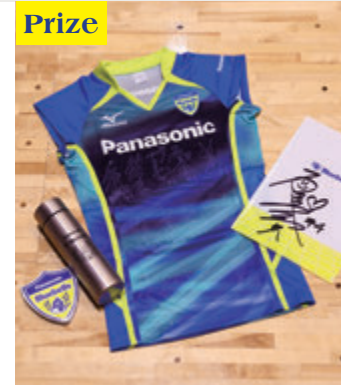
### PX-AI Is Available Globally

PX-AI is an AI assistance service based on GPT-3.5 and equipped with advanced natural language processing technology. Initially available only in Japan, as of July 13, it is now also accessible in regions outside of China and Europe.

<https://pxai.is.jp.panasonic.com/> \*



The cover of the current issue was shot at Panasonic XC KADOMA, which opened in the city of Kadoma, Osaka (in front of Keihan Electric Railway Nishisano Station) in May this year. As a next-generation workspace of the Panasonic Group, the facility features office rooms and an open space for collaborating with internal and external colleagues as well as the local community.



### Be in the running to win Panasonic Bluebells memorabilia (replica shirt, thermos flask commemorating two season titles, towel, and folder) autographed by Narumi Ishida. Two winners will be chosen.

How to enter: Fill in the application form and enter the required details to submit your entry.

Entry period: July 25–August 25, 2023

We will notify the winner of the shipment of their prize. We look forward to many entries!



### Browsing the Live Your Best magazine

Each issue of the Panasonic Group magazine *Live Your Best* is also available for viewing from your smartphone or other devices. Enjoy it with your family.



### We are looking for employees to be featured in our magazine.

Anyone can be nominated, either by oneself or by someone else. We also welcome your feedback on the magazine. Please contact us here:

E-mail: [newsroom\\_pnre@ml.jp.panasonic.com](mailto:newsroom_pnre@ml.jp.panasonic.com)



Forms

### Editors' Postscript

- Before the talking with Kusumi, the participants shared their thoughts on employee entrepreneurship via Teams. It's a shame we couldn't include it as an additional feature! (Hirosuke Nakanishi)
- *Autonomous Organizational Personnel* by Ryuta Suzuki is a book that describes exactly what employee entrepreneurship is. (Junko Okabe)
- For me, a career is a long journey back and forth to find out what it really means to work and how to go about it. (Yo Iwata)
- I'm learning about independence from my beloved dog. In turn, I hope that my daughter can learn about independence from me. (Yasushi Namikawa)
- I love to take on new challenges. For me, the most important PLP is Evolution. (Tatsuya Fukuzawa)
- I'm a mother of two who has just joined the Editorial Team. I'll do everything I can to create meaningful content for the reader. (Aki Aramaki)
- If you work with a sense of ownership and with the mindset of a leader, every day becomes more exciting. (Yasuhiro Yonezawa)