

University of Economics, Prague

BACHELOR THESIS

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2007

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JAPANESE MANAGEMENT

**What makes Japanese companies, especially management style so
successful and competitive**

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2007

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DECLARATION

Herewith I declare that I have written this bachelor thesis

Japanese Management

fully on my own and that I have not used any other sources
apart from those listed in the references.

Prague, December 14, 2007

.....
Petra Jankotová

TITLE AND ANNOTATION

Japanese management

The thesis defines and analyses the historical development and current importance of the Japanese managerial style for theory and practice. In the application part, the applicability of Japanese approaches is analysed and the future development and benefits of the Japanese corporations are anticipated.

ABSTRACT

This thesis's aim is to help reader realize and understand what makes Japanese companies, especially Japanese management style, so successful and competitive. While giving background information on Japanese economy and manners, basic description of some of Japanese managerial techniques as well as examples of their usage in companies, the main idea is to find out what the prerequisites of successful implementation of Japanese managerial techniques are.

The reason for looking for such prerequisites is the thought that not only managerial techniques themselves (their "technical side") are the key for success. It is also, and very importantly, the way how they are used. It is knowledge what "forces" are driving the success of the techniques. Therefore, in order to understand what the Japanese managerial techniques are and who the people developing and using them are about, I step by step gathered related information and in a summarized form wrote them in this thesis. Analyzing the information I was able to conclude that there are three prerequisites for successful implementation of Japanese managerial techniques. It is firstly a technical side of managerial techniques itself, secondly it is a psychological aspect (learning Japanese management also means learning pieces of Japanese culture and manners and only if that culture is understood and applied, techniques can show they full potential) and thirdly it is hard working.

ABSTRAKT

Cílem této bakalářské práce je pomoci čtenáři uvědomit si a pochopit, co umožňuje japonským společnostem, zvláště japonskému stylu řízení (japonskému managementu), aby byly úspěšné a konkurenceschopné. Prostřednictvím poskytování informací o japonské ekonomice a japonských vlastnostech a chování, poskytováním základního popisu několika japonských manažerských technik stejně jako příkladů jejich použití ve společnostech, naplnuji hlavní myšlenku, kterou je zjistit předpoklady úspěšného uvedení technik do praxe.

Důvodem pro hledání těchto předpokladů je myšlenka, že nejenom samotné manažerské techniky (jejich "technická stránka") jsou klíčem k úspěchu. Je to také především způsob, jak jsou používány. Je to znalost toho, co je hnací silou úspěchu těchto technik. Abych tedy pochopila, co japonské manažerské techniky znamenají a kdo jsou lidé, kteří je rozvíjejí a používají, shromáždila jsem krok za krokem související informace a shrnula je v této práci. Pomocí analýzy těchto informací jsem došla k závěru, že existují tři nezbytné předpoklady pro úspěšnou implementaci japonských manažerských technik. Za prvé je to technická stránka technik jako taková, za druhé se jedná o psychologický aspekt (poznávání japonského managementu znamená také poznávání kousků japonské kultury a jejich zvyků a chování a pouze pokud rozumíme kultuře a aplikujeme ji, teprve potom mohou techniky ukázat svůj plný potenciál) a v neposlední řadě je jedním z předpokladů pracovitost.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to thank my supervisor Ing. Pavel Štrach, Ph.D. for guiding me through the process of writing of this thesis. I appreciate his helpfulness, accuracy and consequentiality as well as his prompt and dependable responses.

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INTRODUCTION

The topic of the Thesis is: *“Japanese Management; it defines the historical development and current importance of the Japanese managerial style for theory and practice. It also anticipates the future development and benefits of the Japanese corporations.”*

When searching for relevant information and when finding the answer for my thesis question, first I gathered background information on Japanese economy and people, second I analyzed information about Japanese managerial styles and added my opinions or comments on them. Third I studied how managerial techniques are applied in practice and finally I connected findings from previous steps and drew my conclusion. The structure of the thesis reflects these steps.

Based on my perception and based on general public opinion, Japan is a very prosperous country. Also based on available data, Japan has been economically very successful for more than 30 years and in spite of its recent economical troubles it has been the second most technologically advanced economy in the world after the US and the third largest economy in the world after the US and China, measured on a purchasing power parity basis¹. It is obvious that Japanese economy works well.

When something works, it is worth studying why it works and whether it was rather coincidence, or whether a universally useful principle or an advice can be extracted and used in other places or/and under different circumstances. Since the management of companies is a crucial essence of their success, when we talk about Japanese economical success, we should focus on Japanese managerial styles. Besides these motives I am also personally interested in Japanese culture, people and their behaviour which are reported to be different from those practiced in other Western countries. Since managerial techniques mirror Japanese specifics I wanted to know more about them, and I was interested in how and why they work. Based on the above mentioned general and personal reasons, I chose to write about Japanese management.

Effort to understand the topic enables and forces me to learn more about it. While studying different Japanese managerial techniques as well as basic Japanese economical and cultural background, I search for The Essence of Japanese economical success. In other words, my aim is to figure out what makes Japanese companies, especially their manner of

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency. World Factbook – Japan. www.cia.gov, November 29, 2006

management so successful and competitive. Both for the purposes of this thesis I perform connected researches, sort and summarize information and draw the conclusion and I want to pass those results of my work to others, to give them a chance to gain new and hopefully useful knowledge or ideas, to give them a chance to come to their own conclusions by reading given information or just have readers think what involves the management and what makes it better.

Japanese (Asian) culture is significantly different from the one of Europe or America. Cultural aspects influence lifestyle, life priorities and values and naturally also management styles. The consequence of such difference is that by exploring Japanese management styles and their background we can get “new” ideas which are very different from ones we would get taking in consideration only our country or region experiences and customs. Those ideas can be very inspiring and useful for improving our companies’ productivity and competitiveness or at least it is very useful to know, understand and appreciate other views and ideas.

“Japanese managerial style” is a widely and frequently used term. One of the goals of this thesis is also the aim to find out what the Japanese managerial style really is, what types of the Japanese management there are, what their main features are and whether they are really different from other “non-Japanese” styles. As Strach and Everett indicate², there are a lot of terms that have been adopted as Japanese; “KAIZEN is used for continuous improvement, KANBAN for just-in-time, RINGI for decision-making by consensual understanding, and POKAYOKE for mistake-proofing of processes”. Many people also use terms such as Keiretsu, Just-in-Time (JIT), Lean Manufacturing, and Total Quality Management. But does everybody know what they really mean, what their contribution, history and development are?

Since exploration of chosen topic requires information on many managerial styles as well as other connected economical data, this thesis includes considerable number of quotations. The reason for using quotations is not to plagiarize or save work, but the fact that I did not invent managerial styles mentioned in the thesis and I do not even have personal experience with any of those. At the same time I had to learn about them to be able to get an answer to my key question “What makes Japanese companies, especially their management style so successful and competitive”. I also wanted to give enough background information for

² Source: Source: STRACH, P., EVERETT, A. M.: Is there anything left to learn from Japanese companies?

readers to create their own opinion. In order to be sure enough that stated info is objective, I always sought through at least three sources to verify the acquired data. In cases when found data were contradictory I checked more sources.

Of course, I have included my own thoughts in the thesis. I comment on prerequisites for implementation of individual managerial styles as well as about their advantages and disadvantages. Naturally the conclusion comes from my own analysis and evaluation of gathered information.

For the “application” part of the thesis, I examined two Japanese companies in the Czech Republic, both from the automotive sector. I tried to show the way employees are influenced by the different style of management and also how easy/difficult it is for them to except the technique and adhere to them. The functioning of the techniques is also described from the companies’ point of view provided by the official representatives.

I used the opportunity to write the thesis in English because I want to practise my knowledge of this language which I gathered during my secondary education and further during my two years studies in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Also, English is in my opinion almost a universal business language.

CONTEXT OF JAPANESE ECONOMY AND MANNERS

Since managerial techniques are directly connected with companies and companies create an economy in this chapter there is background information on Japanese economy starting from World War II trying to show its development. Since managerial techniques are invented by people and they are used by and involve people there is also information on Japanese people culture and behaviour.

1.1 Overview of Japanese economy from 1945 to 2007

To summarize Japanese economic achievements and problems, four following sections briefly describe important milestones in the nation's post-war history, namely from 1945 until now. Its aim is to show what circumstances surrounded Japanese companies and its employees and what their response was. By learning how further mentioned forces influenced Japan we can compare impact of similar forces on European countries and the United States.

1.1.1 Post-war Period

Talking about Japanese economic history, we have to take into account that it is quite different from the rest of the world as we can observe on its development after World War II. "During WWII, Japanese economy collapsed and was reaching to 1/5 of the pre-war level"³ and the nation had to take measures to recover. The United States occupation (1945-1952) was in token of the rebuilding of the country and of the regaining of the economic power of Japan established during the Meiji period. "American assistance totalled about US \$ 1.9 billion during the occupation."⁴

Japan's high literacy and education level and strong discipline were some of the key factors that contributed to a fast recovery. Japan supported large investments into development of modern technologies which brought the country advantage over the remaining states whose equipment became outworn after the war. New sectors, such as machinery and automobile industry, started to play an important role in the Japanese economy.

³ Source: MARHOULOVÁ, D.: Japonské systémy řízení, pp.23

⁴ Source: Wikipedia – Economic History of Japan, <http://en.wikipedia.org>, August 1, 2007

Post-war success was also partly caused by the high productivity, relatively low wage costs and low unemployment rate. For example, according to the Japanese Statistics Bureau⁵, the unemployment rate in 1972 was only 1.4 %. (The unemployment rate remained quite stable throughout 1970s and 1980s and started to rise only in mid 1990s. The latest figures show that the unemployment rate reached 3.6% in June 2007⁶.)

There was an interesting phenomenon in Japanese economy that occurred in this period – Keiretsu, post-war successor of Zaibatsu. Keiretsu is a formation of horizontally-integrated alliances consisting of big enterprises and their subcontractors very often covering a wide range of different industries. The biggest and most important keiretsu in Japan were always concentrated around a bank which supported the keiretsu companies and would lend money to them as well. The bank would therefore also held equity positions in the companies⁷ and this equity position ensured the central bank with a control over the companies within keiretsu. The bank also acted as a bailout entity. The biggest and most important Japanese keiretsu are among others Mitsui, Mitsubishi or Sumimoto groups⁸. There are also smaller keiretsu such as Nissan and Hitachi.

1.1.2 1973 Oil Shock

October 1973 meant a great shock to the United States', Western Europe countries' and Japan's economies. As a result of the Yom Kippur War, the OAPEC decided to cut the supply of crude oil to the above mentioned countries that had supported Israel in the Yom Kippur War. Affected countries were forced to raise the price of oil causing the recession. Also Japan that had at last recovered from the post-war damages lacked the crude oil and this situation dealt a blow to Japanese economy that had become practically reliant on foreign petroleum. For the first time in the post-war period, Japan found itself in price inflation. Industrial production declined in Japan, a phenomenon that occurred in other countries as well. However, Japan was able to fight its way up again and in the course of time it became less dependant on foreign oil. This fact resulted in productivity increase. Of course, it was considerably lower than in 1960s, yet even United States could not compete with "5 % average growth rate"⁹. In 1980's, Japan's growth was modest but consistent and the country maintained its position. As a result of this consistent growth, trade surpluses were maintained

⁵ Source: Statistics Bureau, <http://www.stat.go.jp>, August 17, 2007

⁶ Source: Wikipedia : Economic History of Japan, <http://en.wikipedia.org>, August 1, 2007

⁷ Source: Wikipedia, [www.en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org), October 21, 2007

⁸ Source: EGAP, www.egap.cz, October 22, 2007

⁹ Source: Wikipedia – Economic History of Japan, <http://en.wikipedia.org>, August 1, 2007

and also stringent tariffs and policies, which encouraged people to save their money, resulted in appreciation of Yen and in accumulation of money in banks. Also high reinvestment rate was a driving power for Japanese economy.

1.1.3 Japanese Price Asset Bubble

The use for large stock of money in banks was sought. It was natural to lend money to people and businesses. Due to large money supply the conditions to obtain a loan were favourable, it means there was low interest and also necessary loans' security was lower. As a result of easily accessible credit the investments in stocks and real estates grew rapidly. The goal of many was the speculation. At the beginning (in 80's) both investments and speculation¹⁰ had good outcomes, which even catalyzed both borrowing and lending more. For following years (1980-1990) everything went "just fine" and bubble was growing and banks were giving increasingly risky loans. In 1986 the prices of lands and stocks were getting sky high. For example "land beneath the Imperial Palace in Tokyo was worth more than the entire state of California and also price per square meter in Tokyo's Ginza district was reaching US \$ 1.5 million"¹¹ and, as many believe, prices long time ago stopped to reflect the utility. In 1990 bubble burst and it hit Japanese economy hard for the next decade. It was interesting and unusual that decrease of real-estate prices occurred gradually rather than suddenly.

1.1.4 Post Bubble Economy

After the price asset bubble burst, Japanese economy started to decline. This impact was reflected for example in decrease of stock and land prices and also in GDP growth deceleration which fell to only 0.1 % in 1993¹². During the next two years, there was a mild improvement which raised suspension and hope among the population, however the original expectations were not met and the economy dropped back. Despite the difficult period Japan was undergoing in 1990s, Japan recorded the strong growth between 2003 and 2006¹³. Despite the fact that the main reason for the increase was mainly caused by Chinese interest in Japanese products, other sectors started to thrive again, too. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit Limited Country Profile from 2007, Japanese GDP per capita with

¹⁰ Investment is understood as activity which creates or seeks to create a value whereas speculation is understood as an activity whose goal is rather to exploit current situation for immediate profit than to create a value.

¹¹ Source: Wikipedia – Japanese asset price bubble, <http://en.wikipedia.org>, August 22, 2007

¹² Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit Limited, www.eiu.com, August 9, 2007, pp. 17

¹³ Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit Limited, www.eiu.com, August 9, 2007, pp. 34

US \$ 34,000 is among the highest in the world, which among others indicates that the worst problems might finally be over.

Paragraphs about Japanese economy documented, that in spite of many challenges Japan has kept faster or slower growth. However, those paragraphs do not explain us why Japanese have been successful. Therefore knowing economical data we can proceed to another aspect which might bring useful information.

1.2 Japanese Manners

Another aspect which definitely has to be taken in consideration is behaviour of “objects” involved in economical development. Those “objects” are the blue collar employees, white collar employees, managers of different levels, directors, owners – simply people. People as part of economical system are obviously the most important since they both create systems and follow them (produce). (People also create demand side, which I am now purposely omitting, because my concentration is on supply side – the companies which produce and offer its products and are using various managerial techniques.) Since people are the crucial part in production (not only in sense of producing but also meaning organization, development, improvements) in following paragraphs I try to describe Japanese culture and behaviour. The given description is rather extensive, because peoples’ traits can be seen in all their actions, thus also in management.

1.2.1. Japanese Manners Summarized From Various Sources

In Japanese culture there are some very distinctive features and values, which has developed and stabilized over long time. Japan is the nation that has unfolded into a positive unification of tradition and modernisation.

Japanese are people who see themselves as part of group, part of society and it seems to me that all or most of features and values of their culture are supporting, protecting and developing this concept. From the very beginning, from the time children go to pre-school Japanese are taught to act harmoniously and cooperatively with others. The educational system emphasizes the interdependence of all people, and Japanese children are not raised to be independent but rather to work together.

Japanese have strong feeling of belongingness, which “is not confined to a social frame or reference group in the here and now. It also includes one’s group and place of origin, and

groups and places to which one previously belonged. Preoccupation with, concern about and sensitivity to social relationships and social interaction with other persons are dominant and pervasive. Japanese not only locate themselves within a particular social context, group, or institution, but they give precedence to it."¹⁴ From such group relationships strong mutual dependency ("reciprocal obligation"), which covers social, psychological and material areas, has developed.

There are concepts which help to keep the belongingness or the spirit of working together for the universal, rather than the individual good, working. I can name sharp structure based on hierarchy, honour and etiquette or "avoidance of self-assertion and individualism and the preservation of good relationships despite differences in opinion (called wa)"¹⁵. "Wa concept means harmony as the guiding philosophy for the Japanese in family and business settings and in society as a whole"¹⁶. Another Japanese behavioural value is the concept of "face" or kao. "Saving face is crucial. The Japanese believe that turning down someone's request causes embarrassment and loss of face to the other person. Face is a mark of personal dignity and means having high status with one's peers. The Japanese will try never to do anything to cause loss of face."¹⁷ Purity in interactions with others is another crucial part of integrity creation and ability to imagine other peoples' feelings (omoiyari) brings relation between people to another level. "Omoiyari is considered to be one of the highest in meaningful relations between self and others. What the Japanese mean by empathy is more than sympathy, concern, caring, or even compassion. It refers to the ability and willingness to feel what others are feeling, to vicariously experience the pleasure or pain that are undergoing, and to help them satisfy their wishes. The innermost as well as the outer experiences of the other are shared in such a way and to such a reciprocal degree that, for example, the suffering of one group member is responded to with guilt by other members, as if they were responsible either for causing it or for being unable to prevent it."¹⁸

Looking specifically to Japanese working manners it can not be omitted to say that Japanese spend a lot of time working, not only directly in their companies but also on by company organized "informal" meetings, where work is usually the main topic. It is almost automatic, that Japanese employees stay in work later and without extra payment when asked

¹⁴ Source: W. De Craemer: A Cross-Cultural Perspective on Personhood, November 6, 2007

¹⁵ Source: Culture for Business and Management – Japanese Social and Business Culture , www.communicaid.com, November 1, 2007

¹⁶ Source: Kwintessential – Cross Cultural Solutions – Japan, www.kwintessential.com, November 1, 2007

¹⁷ Source: Kwintessential – Cross Cultural Solutions – Japan, www.kwintessential.com, November 1, 2007

¹⁸ Source: W. De Craemer: A Cross-Cultural Perspective on Personhood, November 6, 2007

by their superior (otherwise it can be viewed as lack of appreciation for work and lack of respect for superior). There are only two weeks of vacation and it is common not to take all vacation days. Time spent by working for companies represents huge part of Japanese mail (women usually do not return to work after having children).

“Company policy is very strict and to deviate from policy is rare. If the company has a way of doing things, then it has to be done that way. The Japanese are very analytical in their process. They want everything analyzed as much as possible.”¹⁹

Japanese decision making process is collective. Japanese will discuss each question with every member of the group until it is agreed by everybody. Every member of the team is important. Relations are based on personal trust and Japanese communicate a lot in work place, so conflicts are more likely to be avoided. Cooperation of employees within and between departments is an integral part of Japanese corporations. Japanese very rarely change jobs.

1.2.2 Japanese Manners Based on Native Japanese

The previous subchapter about Japanese manners was done using various sources. Some of them were quite new, some were a little bit older. I believe the information is correct because many sources confirmed other sources and no sources contradicted. But since I have no personal experience in this area, to verify the information I sent this chapter to my Japanese friend Midori Komazawa asking her to revise it and write her comments and opinions. To provide complete information I should say that she is 35 years old and has been living in Canada for approximately 13 years. In the following box there is her opinion:

¹⁹ Source: Executive Planet – Japan. www.executiveplanet.com, November 15, 2007

Figure 1: Japanese manners from Japanese point of view

White colour or blue colour things were happened in 1980's to early 1990's before bubble. Japan is changing so much. Just like North America now. Young people keep changing jobs even in my generation. They change jobs whichever they can make more money or get better benefits. Not many people stays in one company any more. I remember that my father used to work late or went drinking with his boss after work when he was young. Of course, he is retired now!! When I worked at the company before I came to the North America, I didn't need to do that at all. Unless I wanted. Free beer, why not? For the vacation, I could have used vacation days. It depends on the situation. If there are enough staff to cover, they can take. If they don't, you can take one day in this month, another day in different month. If you didn't have a chance to use vacation days at all. You'll receive money when you quit the company which is totally same to the North America.

We think that we're a part of society and thinks "WA" is important. However, our parents brought us up to be "independent" adult. Not dependant. My understanding of being adult or mature person got to be independent. They must have their own idea and can live independently. They must be able to tell your idea to the other people, even the other is you boss.

One thing I would like to tell you is that Japanese is very hard worker. If you know me, you can tell Just kidding. We studied very much and continue improving because we want to make the best thing in the world. If you see Japanese car, computer, electronics etc. It's the best technique, because we made lots of effort for it. If we're lazy, it wouldn't be happened.

Oh, I'm very proud of being Japanese. I must be taught to beat discrimination now.

As you know, our culture is quite different from yours. It may be difficult to understand at the some points. For example, face. Nowadays people is changing, so this may not apply to younger generation. However, I learned from my parents about face. Even though you had a serious problem or wanted to cry, our classic virtue is try not to show it to other. I think that this will meet to Samurai way. The way how they think or live is very important, which we'll respect. On the other hand, if he is very smart, he tries not to show how smart he is. Although other people will find out how smart and people start realizing. We like the way of respect and humble. I find that North American always want to show their good things which is too much sometimes except my husband. His brother is tough.

The above mentioned manners of Japanese people are not only interesting and unusual from my European point of view, but, and more importantly, those can give us a lot of answers connected to my thesis question. Reading about Japanese manners gives us an opportunity to know, compare and appreciate different culture.

JAPANESE MANAGERIAL TECHNIQUES

This chapter consists of descriptions of Japanese general and production management techniques, namely: 3 Sacred Treasures, Ringi and Nemawashi, Kaizen, Just-in-Time, Total Quality Control, 5S and Total Productive Maintenance. The overview shows both general and production managerial techniques, but it is definitely not a complete list of all Japanese techniques. It is not an intention. Overview's purpose is to give perception of what is generally and specifically emphasised by individual techniques, what prerequisites of their use are as well as their advantages and downsides.

2.1 General Techniques

When we look at companies we can see similar features regardless of in which industry the respective company is active or which department we look at. Those same features are a need for planning, producing, control and response to both internal and external environment and its issues. General techniques address just this kind of matters. All following general techniques (3 Sacred Treasures, Ringi and Nemawashi) aim to support the company, to have it work better, more effectively and efficiently, although they differ in ways how to achieve such result. Better say different techniques believe that some areas of management are more important in order to achieve the best results and therefore they put different level of emphasis on specific ideas or parts of management. It is also true that many times ideas used by various managerial techniques overlap.

2.1.1 Three Sacred Treasures

Very specific features of Japanese system, the so called "Three Sacred Treasures", are related to Human Resources management and consist of lifetime employment, seniority based wage system and company-based labour unions.

Post World War II success of Japanese companies is believed to be also result of the Three Sacred Treasures (TST). TST's benefit is seen in its connection of two sometimes different interests. Those interests are ones of companies (employers) and workers (employees, both blue and white collars). Lifetime employment together with seniority based wage system (and company-based labour unions) kept employees in one company, therefore

it created conditions for increasing of their qualification, gave them certainty and guaranteed increases in their wages. At the same time, companies benefited from qualified employees, who knew their job well and were loyal (also because future (seniority) was promising higher wages). Although, especially from European and American point of view, it is arguable whether this system is the most productive, it is difficult not to see its results and it is for sure, that this system helped to prevent fights or big arguments between employees and employers.²⁰

For successful operation of TST, there must be mutual benefits for both employers and employees. The system also needs to be practised by all or most of the companies on the market (otherwise younger employees could be attracted by places which offer more money and more senior positions without looking to their age). On the other hand, since employees have a guaranteed job ("life-time" employment) and at the same time they cannot really speed up their promotion (because of seniority concept) they can become apathetic. Another down side is employers' inflexibility in downsizing when market is slower. In my opinion, it is a very interesting and for a long time working way how to achieve good relationship between employees and employers.

2.1.2 Ringi & Nemawashi

Ringi and *Nemawashi* procedures play the most important roles in the collective decision-making and problem-solving processes. *Nemawashi* means prior consultations and discussions among concerned parties in order to reach consensus, whereas *Ringi* is a formal method of "writing and detailing the decision"²¹.

Ringi has been used since before World War II. It is a process by which means employees are motivated to develop their own ideas and plans for any improvement and/or a change. This bottom-up procedure starts at lower levels within an organization and is usually composed of four steps²²: proposal, circulation, approval, and record. The author of the proposal, which is called "*ringi-sho*", circulates it within a company in order to get an approval from involved persons. The proposal is distributed hierarchically to the departments and affects all concerned parties. Experience, wisdom and knowledge of each employee are gathered during the process which eventually results in reaching a decision by consensus. At every stage, the proposal is confirmed by affixing a seal, therefore, at the end of *ringi-sho*

²⁰ Source: Sekiguchi, T.: The Strategic Choice Model and Industrial Relations in Japan, pp. 94

²¹ Source: VOGEL, E. F.: Modern Japanese Organization and Decision-Making, pp. 128

²² Source: DERESKY, H.: International Management, pp.191

journey when it reaches the president, his seal is in the most cases just a formality. The *ringi* process is tightly linked to *nemawashi* concept that really precedes it and often has a greater importance in the decision-making. *Nemawashi* is understood as prior consultations and discussions among all of the concerned parties in order to avoid any discrepancies or lack of commitment. Thanks to the discussions, employees have enough time to formulate and adjust their opinion before hand without wasting time later.

The system enables people to relatively smoothly reach an agreement. However, there always has to be somebody who has an effort and will to change, to improve, something. Then the system and people involved have to be ready to process such effort.

Owing to the cooperation between various departments, it is clearly set within the concept who bears responsibility for certain actions. Also, the most important decisions are recorded and kept in writing for a long time, thus the way some situations were dealt with can serve as a foundation for future cases. Another advantage of *ringi* and *nemawashi* is the opportunity for all of the employees to familiarize with diverse procedures within a company and hereby to receive training in practise. The system of *ringi* and *nemawashi* by its nature (discussions at all involved departments and levels) should ensure that when any change is made such change should be accepted by everybody and it should be practicable.

Despite all of the advantages, it is obvious that both *nemawashi* and *ringi* are very time-consuming systems. Before the original plan is transformed into a form everybody agrees with, it takes a lot of time. While the processes are based on the universal consensus, there is also a risk of accepting a compromise decision which might lose its original intention. My personal opinion is that the process can become an organizational “nightmare”.

2.2 Production Management Techniques

In contrast with general techniques which are applicable to companies in most industries there are production management techniques which concentrate on specific parts of companies, on their production departments. At the same time it is important to say that when we talk about production management techniques it is not solely about production (including procurement). There is always interconnection with other company's departments, e.g. sales or human resources. Commented production techniques are Kaizen, Just-in-Time, Total Quality Control, 5S and Total Productive Maintenance. Techniques Just-in-Time and Kaizen are examined in more detail and further in this thesis (Chapter III) there is also an example of their use in companies.

2.2.1 Kaizen

Kaizen is made up of two words; KAI meaning *change* or *reform* and ZEN standing for *good* or *improvement*. The English translation is therefore continuous improvement. According to Masaaki Imai²³, the founder and chairman of Kaizen Institute, “KAIZEN strategy is the most important concept of Japanese management – the key to the Japanese economical success and competitiveness”. When we talk about improvement, we mean improvement at every level within an organization. The process affects ordinary workmen as well as top management and stakeholders.

In one of his books Masaaki Imai explains that Kaizen can *de facto* be understood as an *umbrella term* for many Japanese techniques (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Kaizen umbrella term

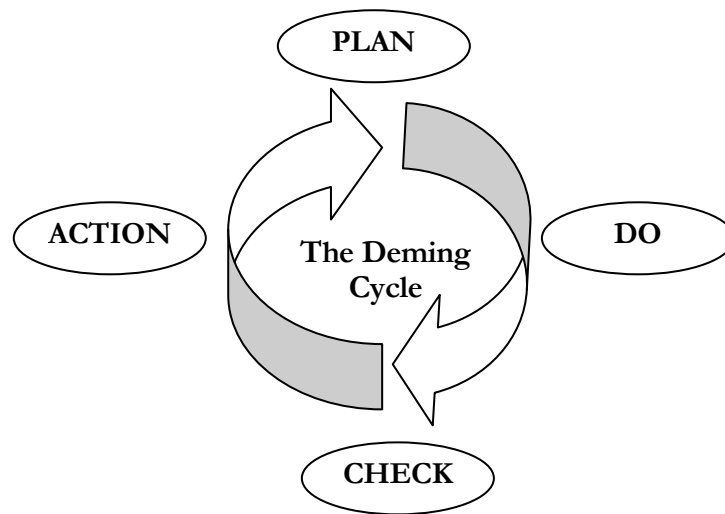
• Customers Orientation	• <i>kanban</i>
• Total Quality Control	• Quality improvement
• Robotics	• Just-in-time
• Quality Control Circles	• No defective products
• Suggestion System	• Small-groups activities
• Automation	• Good relationship between management and employees
• Workplace discipline	
• Total Productive Maintenance	• New products development

Source: IMAI, M.: Kaizen, pp.24

The history of Kaizen goes back to the beginning of 1950's and is connected with Toyota Motor Company. After World War II, American statistical consultant Dr. W. Edwards Deming was invited to give lessons to the Japanese on statistical quality control. During his visits to Japan, Dr. Deming introduced the so-called Deming cycle, also known as the PDCA cycle (see Figure 3) which was supposed to secure constant improvement by means of quality control. The fundamental idea of the cycle is to stop production immediately when a defect occurs and to look for a solution leading to a total improvement.

²³ Source: IMAI, M.: Kaizen, pp.15

Figure 3: PDCA cycle



Toyota Motor Company was the first one to put the quality control cycles into practice. Mr. Taiichi Ohno, the former Executive Vice President of the company, developed nowadays a world-known Toyota Production System (TPS) that was based on Dr. Deming's lessons on quality. TPS is based on two concepts – "*jidoka*" and "*just-in-time*". Jidoka explains that "quality must be built in during the manufacturing process" and Just-in-Time principle lies in "making only what is needed, when it is needed, and in the amount needed"²⁴. TPS is in fact the origin of kaizen.

To ensure that the system of Kaizen works effectively, it is necessary to respect a few principles, namely that an organization is involved as a whole, improvement is never-ending, there must be a clearly defined process (with strict rules and procedures) within an organization and it is also taken into account that, unlike the Western style, not only results are considered but also the process itself. Process orientation means that a goal or a result itself is not the only important thing. It's also the path you take to achieve it. In United States (or Western countries in general), managers tend to evaluate the work of their employees by actual achievement. If a project fails, the amount of work is often not taken into consideration and it is the result that really counts. In Japan and Japanese companies, on the contrary, it is already the motivation, devotion and endeavour to accomplish the task that matters. Japanese philosophy is to make little improvements of each individual process as often as necessary to ensure a smoother work flow in the future. "They (Japanese) are more means oriented, or process oriented, whereas Americans tend to focus more on the bottom

²⁴ Source: Toyota, www.toyota.co.jp, October 17, 2007

line, on the ends... We feel if it is not white, by deduction it has to be black. The Japanese live comfortably with gray."²⁵

Likely, the most powerful feature of *kaizen* is the one of continuous improvement ("bit by bit" brings surprising results). We could also name plenty of other single advantages, but in my opinion the most important one is the concentration on the company itself, its processes and never-ending will to improve them involving all employees and stakeholders. On the other hand, the ever-present improvement, thus ever-present change may cause heavy administrative burden. If ever-present changes are not managed well, i.e. they are not properly incorporated in all connected procedures and manuals, then confusion and disorder can occur instead of required improvements.

2.2.2 Just-in-Time

Just-in-Time (JIT) concept requires having all resources at the right time at the right place, of the right quality and amount. Ohno, JIT supporter, wanted to achieve that by eliminating all *muri*, *mura* and *muda*²⁶. The system includes principle of having nearly no supplies.

Communication tool within JIT concept is *kanban* – a label. *Kanban* is a pull system which means that the previous process produces only as many products as is needed for the following process. It is "a method of controlling the flow of production through the factory based on a customer's demand. It controls the flow of resources in a production process by replacing only what has been consumed"²⁷. *Kanban* – the label – is attached to every box of units that enters the production. When the components are used, *kanban* is given back and serves partly as the evidence of what was actually done and partly as an order for next units. Thus, *kanban* can minimize the processes.

As already mentioned in the previous subchapter, JIT concept is one of two "pillars" of Toyota Production System. Nevertheless, it was originally mentioned by Henry Ford, the founder of Ford Motor Company. In his book "My Life and Work"²⁸ he explains: We have found in buying materials that it is not worth while to buy for other than immediate needs. We buy only enough to fit into the plan of production, taking into consideration the state of transportation at the time. If transportation were perfect and

²⁵ Source: PASCALE, R. T., ATHOS, A.G.: The Art of Japanese Management, pp. 98

²⁶ *muri* = overburden; *mura* = unevenness; *muda* = waste

²⁷ Source: IMEC, www.imec.org, October 20, 2007

²⁸ Source: FORD, H.: Můj život a dílo, pp.66

an even flow of materials could be assured, it would not be necessary to carry any stock whatsoever. The carloads of raw materials would arrive on schedule and in the planned order and amounts, and go from the railway cars into production. That would save a great deal of money, for it would give a very rapid turnover and thus decrease the amount of money tied up in materials."²⁹ Taiichi Ohno later adopted Henry Ford's idea and further developed it. He claims, that the main reason for it was the need to produce smaller amount of more types of automobiles; this strategy completely contradicted American style, whose aim was to produce as much as possible similar cars.

We have already mentioned Ohno's intention to eliminate all waste, so-called *muda*. He classified *muda* into 7 groups³⁰:

- (1) overproduction
- (2) waste of time spent at a machine
- (3) waste connected to conveyance of units
- (4) processing waste
- (5) inventory waste
- (6) motion waste
- (7) waste in form of defective units

Avoiding these wastes is conditioned exactly by adopting of JIT and *jidoka* concepts. Normally, the units from one point of production are delivered to the next level at the moment of their completion. Using JIT, this process is reversed; a worker from a following production stage returns to the previous stage to collect the exact amount of certain components, which implies lower stock.

For successful implementation of JIT concept, it is required to set clear and exact rules and procedures and, more importantly, to respect the rules. Other important conditions include having flexible and reliable suppliers, precise supply contracts, high level of automation and technical equipment and high level of organization. JIT system has the following advantages: shortened production time, shortened time of non-production activities, lowered inventory (shifting inventory on supplier side) thus reducing cost. It brings merits such as smaller needed area, avoiding or reduction of theft, damages and obsolete stock; better balance between various processes and problems clarification.

²⁹ Accurate English quotation retrieved from www.phrases.org.uk, October 18, 2007

³⁰ Source: IMAI, M.: Kaizen, pp.102

Apart from benefits that JIT brings to the companies, there are also a few weaknesses of the concept. It is necessary to realize that within JIT everything and everyone is interdependent. If one part of an assembly line stops working, the delivery times are endangered. Labour strikes or harbour lockouts can be another major threat to the production. Suppliers and customers are also exposed to supply shocks caused by a sudden decrease of certain goods. That's also a reason why companies often use at least two suppliers for each component serving as a back-up system. Besides that, the JIT concept is also organizationally-demanding. It requires strict following of rules and procedures from employees' side, which may also make hiring of suitable employees difficult.

JIT is from my point of view a very effective concept when performed correctly. It tries to remove or minimize all aspects which are not necessary for production itself. It studies and streamlines a production process.

2.2.3 Total Quality Control (TQC)

What is a quality control? The first thing that strikes the most of the people is the quality of products. In Japanese interpretation quality of products is only a part of TQC. First and foremost, TQC focuses on people and tries to grave into employees' minds the essence of quality. It is a process requiring cooperation of every department starting with market research, production, sales, services to customers and ending with HR management and education of employees. It is a method using statistical and analytical tools.

Kaoru Ishikawa, Japanese university professor and "Father of Circles"³¹, named six main TQC characteristics in Japan³²: TQC involving all employees, emphasis on education and training, quality control circles activities, TQC audits (Deming Award, Presidential Audit), statistical methods application and nationwide TQC support.

After World War II, Japanese products lacked the needed quality. Therefore, in 1954 the Japanese Union of Scientists and Engineers (JUSE) invited an American industrial engineer J.M. Juran to Japan to teach Quality Management³³. It was the first time, when the quality control was regarded as a tool to improve managerial performance. It was also already mentioned Kaoru Ishikawa, who played an important role in this process. At that time, he was a member of JUSE and he put through his intention of bringing quality experts to Japan.

³¹ Quality control circle (QC) is a group of employees who gather to discuss the work place improvement and afterwards present their ideas to management.

³² Source: IMAI, M.: Kaizen, pp.63

³³ JUSE also invited Dr. Deming but unlike J.M. Juran, Dr. Deming focused on statistical quality control.

Later, he expanded Deming's PDCA cycle into six steps, he invented the "Fishbone diagram" and continued to teach TQC in Japan.

It was also Ishikawa, who introduced seven statistical and analytical tools to identify a problem and find a way for its improvement. These methods are called "Seven Quality Control Tools", Seven Basic Tools or Q Seven. They have become an irreplaceable part of quality control and are often used by QC circles. The tools consist of³⁴:

- **Ishikawa diagram** (Cause-and-effect, fishbone diagram) – shows causes of a certain problem; it is used for analysis of process characteristics
- **Check sheet** – a structured form to tabulate the results by an ordinary control of a situation
- **Control charts** – statistical process control, studies how processes change with time, helps reveal any abnormality
- **Histogram** – a graph used for showing frequency distribution, a method used to define problems
- **Pareto chart** – a graphic illustration of importance of problems/factors
- **Scatter diagram** – two sets of data are entered into the graph showing mutual relationship
- **Stratification** – a method used in combination with other tools depending on purpose of the analysis

TQC is a concept involving all employees and requires a consistent approach. The right selection of monitored data is very important as well as the need for the involved employees to have sufficient statistical methods knowledge. Emphasis is also put onto specific numbers of production, defects and efficiency, therefore behaviour of production over time can be monitored, quantified, researched and directed. One of the disadvantages of the concept is that there is a plenty of data involved and they can easily become confusing or difficult to understand if not managed well and if control is not done consistently – i.e. if apples are compared with oranges.

The way I see the method is that it tries to understand a production process by looking at it using quantitative methods. Various types of graphical explanation of numerical data are used. Graphical explanation (graphs, diagrams) changes data into more easily understandable and more easily comparable information.

³⁴ Source: American Society for Quality, www.asq.org, October 13, 2007

2.2.4 5S

The essence of 5S methodology is “a cleanup”, more specifically organizing workspace by eliminating waste. It is a method of creating of elementary standards³⁵. The term “5S” refers to five Japanese words starting with “S”: *seiri, seiton, seiso, seiketsu* and *shitsuke*.

Seiri – Organize – separate what is not needed and remove it (e.g. semi-finished goods, unnecessary tools and machines, defective parts, papers and documents)

Seiton – Sort – arrange and place things in such a way that they can be found and used whenever needed; elimination of extra motion is desired

Seiso – Clean – keep workplace clean and neat

Seiketsu – Purity (personal) – accept purity as your personal habit

Shitsuke – Self Discipline – maintain the previous four standards and procedures

Set order has to be functional and practical. Also the same prerequisite permeates all of the techniques and that is respecting and following the rules and that counts also for 5S method. In case of 5S concept, the main objective to achieve is the workplace discipline and efficiency. When everything has its designated location, people do not have to waste time by looking for things and rearranging them. Also, when rules are respected, it is easy to find out when something is missing from its location.

When working area is cleaned up and exact rules set, it automatically psychically discourages people from making a mess or/and doing things in disorganized manner. Also work safety is increased. Therefore, I do not see any disadvantages of this method.

2.2.5 Total Productive Maintenance (TPM)

The goal of the concept is to maximize the efficiency of the equipment for its entire life. A very important part of TPM is the already mentioned 5S methodology. TPM consists of 8 pillars, each of those aims at achieving “zero” target. These pillars include³⁶:

- **Kobetsu-Kaizen** – focusing on step-by-step improvements
- **Jishu-Hozen** – autonomous maintenance
- **Planned Maintenance** – defect-free equipment
- **Training** – multi-skilled employees
- **Kaizen**
- **Hinshitzu-Hozen** – quality maintenance, elimination of variances

³⁵ Source: Kaizen Institute, www.cz.kaizen.com, October 7, 2007

³⁶ Source: www.plant-maintenance.com, October 22, 2007

- **Safety-Health-Environment** – safe workplace
- **Office TPM** – goal is increased office automation.

The TPM system (much like other not only managerial techniques) demands a few prerequisites that should be fulfilled. Top management needs to create a system that appreciates individual capability and activities in the field of TPM. The implementation requires integration of each employee at every level of the company.

One of the main benefits of the TPM system is the motivation of the employees to maintain the products. According to National Institute of Standards and Technology³⁷, manufacturing operations achieved an improvement within a relatively short period of time (6-12 month) thanks to TPM. The improvement areas include for example the quality improvement or the overall equipment efficiency improvement. Downside that can be mentioned in connection with TPM is that it depends on specific people (specific people, who carry out autonomous maintenance on their specific machines). The concept requires more qualified employees, too.

According to me, TPM is proactive concept, it does not wait until the machine is broken, it performs regular and planned maintenance. This concept, relatively unusually for Japanese environment, significantly lies on individual persons (autonomous maintenance, multi-skilled employees). To me it seems that this system involves also a lot of human factor instead of mostly system factor.

To provide a reader with digest of the main features of the above described production managerial techniques, the table follows (Figure 4). When analyzing the techniques, it can clearly be understood that the techniques have many features in common and even that techniques mingle. Main common factor is that each technique is in majority of cases aimed to be used and followed by the whole company, including all its stakeholders or at least by all respective department employees. Another common factor, which seems significant and very important to me, is that some of the rules of each respective technique are not technical but rather psychological, aiming at real change of thinking of involved people.

Although techniques have common features they are obviously not the same. In fact techniques are usually one complementary to another, which can easily be seen in “Main Aim” column of the following table, which shows Kaizen – continuous improvement,

³⁷ Source: American National Institute of Standards and Technology, www.mep.nist.gov, October 22, 2007

JIT – All resources at the right time at the right place, of the right quality and amount, TQS – quality, 5S – workplace discipline and efficiency, TPM – maximization of the efficiency of the equipment for its entire life. Doesn't the use of all of them seem to be a good mix? Therefore two or more techniques are many times used simultaneously in companies, each technique covering specific area of companies' functions.

As the flow of this thesis is to stepwise give relevant information first and only then come to the conclusion using and analyzing gathered information the impact of above techniques and its reasons will be examined in the final part of this thesis. Information given is another link of the chain which is heading to the answer of my thesis question. Having gone through theoretical information about some of the Japanese managerial techniques, we now proceed to see how the chosen techniques (JIT, Kaizen, 5S) are applied and work in reality in two Japanese (or in one case partly Japanese) companies here in the Czech Republic.

Figure 4: Main features of the Japanese Production Management Techniques

Technique	Main Aim	Parts of Company's Operations Influenced	Means	Contribution	Connected with
Kaizen	Continuous improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affects ordinary workmen as well as top management and stakeholders organization is involved as a whole also process itself is important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> quality must be built in during the manufacturing process (Jidoka) making only what is needed, when it is needed, and in the amount needed (JIT) clearly defined process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> improvement bit by bit surely heading to significant improvement. The strength is in regularity and steadiness 	<p>"Umbrella term" for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customers Orientation Total Quality Control Robotics Quality Control Circles Suggestion System Automation Workplace discipline Total Productive Maintenance Kanban Quality improvement Just-in-time No defective products Small-groups activities Good relationship between Management and employees New products development

JIT	All resources at the right time at the right place, of the right quality and amount. Includes having nearly no supplies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production (including procurement) process. within JIT everything and everyone is interdependent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good communication system (Kanban) Pull system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elimination of waste It studies and streamlines a production process 	
TQC (Total Quality Control)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> involving all employees, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> statistical and analytical tools emphasis on education and training, quality control circles activities, TQC audits nationwide TQC support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identification of the problem and its solving based on statistical and analytical tools Various types of graphical explanation of numerical data used behaviour of production over time can be monitored, quantified researched and directed looking at process using quantitative methods quality control regarded as a tool to improve managerial performance 	

5S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To achieve the workplace discipline and efficiency "A cleanup", (organization of workspace by eliminating waste) 	<p>Almost any place within the respective company (production places, offices)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize Sort Clean Purity (as personal habit) Self Discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work place is neat and organized it automatically psychologically discourages people from making a mess or/and doing things in disorganized manner. work safety is increased 	<p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5S methodology Kaizen
TPM (Total Productive Maintenance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maximize the efficiency of the equipment for its entire life Aims at achieving "zero" target 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> more than usually depends on specific people (specific people, who carry out autonomous maintenance on their specific machines implementation requires integration of each employee at every level of the company 	<p>step-by-step improvements autonomous maintenance defect-free equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> multi-skilled employees Kaizen quality maintenance, elimination of variances safe workplace Office TPM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased office automation proactive concept, it does not wait until the machine is broken, it performs regular and planned maintenance 	<p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5S methodology Kaizen

APPLICATION OF THE JAPANESE MANAGEMENT IN THE COMPANIES

In the above chapter we had a chance to read about some of the general and production Japanese managerial techniques. In individual subchapters there was a description of each technique trying to show its main aim, means how to achieve it, influenced departments of a company and actual contribution. In a digest and lucid way the same information is listed in the table at the end of the previous chapter. Having known such “technical” information I explored two companies using some of the techniques. The reason of the exploration is not so much effort to exactly describe used techniques and to put down specific technical details about their implementation but it is rather, in line with aim of this work, an effort to find out what the key for their success (effectiveness) is, what limits it and by what their effectiveness is conditioned.

Reasoning for my approach is the following. There is a lot of information on Japanese managerial techniques and it is not difficult to find them and read about them. Since that information is in fact a technical description of a given approach to management (given managerial technique) it is either not difficult to understand it. Information which is much more difficult to find, and I did not manage to find it at all, is how to apply the technique properly so that it works and what are the prerequisites of its success. Throughout the process of writing this thesis I am coming to clearer and clearer conclusion that the techniques themselves (I mean their “technical” characteristics) are not the most important issues. It seems to me that it is easy to find oneself in a situation when some of the techniques are applied and yet the expected result is not coming. My reasonable suspicion is that the situation, similar to case when we apply cover without inside or when we cure symptoms and not the causes, can easily happen. Therefore, my exploration of two companies and exploration of their usage of Japanese managerial techniques is directed to interaction between the technique and their users, employees.

For this purpose I have identified two companies. Those are branches of successful global companies, both from the automotive industry. The first one is a car producer TPCA Company (partly Japanese) and second is a fully-owned Japanese car parts producer. I created a questionnaire (see Appendix 1) and asked two people from each

company to answer it. The aim was to get a view (answers to my questions) from both crucial parts in a production process. Firstly, the official company idea how the techniques should work, how it really works and what are the connected issues were sought. Secondly, answers to the same questions from the employee side were asked for. Both the unfilled questionnaire and the filled ones can be found in the Appendix section. In case of TPCA, I have also analyzed an internet “blog” to get related information.

The reliability of information gathered from the questionnaires or any research increases with the number of questionnaires filled in (number of people asked). To get required information I asked two people from each company. In statistics this number of respondents generally does not give information which would be very certain. Despite that I believe that for the purposes of this thesis the gathered information is sufficient. The reason is that the answers not only did not contradict, but exactly fitted in a “picture” which has been created by the information written up to this point as well as it is in line with conclusion which has been built up in my mind. Another reason is that by used questionnaires I wanted to show the way the information can be gathered. Taking into consideration the time constraint and the usual extent and requirements of Bachelor Thesis, I did not perform an extensive research. However, in case of TPCA I got additional information using information from internet “blog”, as already mentioned.

3.1 TPCA

The first company used to see how Japanese managerial techniques work there, and how they are perceived, is TPCA (Toyota, Peugeot, Citroën Automobile). This company, located in Central Bohemia nearby Kolin, is a joint venture of Japanese Toyota and French PSA Peugeot Citroën.

Toyota is the biggest Japanese car producer and the world number two. It has in total 52 branches in 27 countries around the world. Toyota, Lexus, Daihatsu and Scion car brands belong to the company. The company is well known for its production system based on clever work flow management, high efficiency and uncompromising quality. This system was introduced more than 50 years ago.³⁸ More information can also be found in this thesis under Chapter 2.2.

³⁸ Source: TPCA CR, www.tpca.cz, November 28, 2007

PSA Peugeot Citroën is owned by Peugeot S.A. company and sells Peugeot and Citroën car brands. Both earlier independent Citroën brand and Peugeot keep their own sales and marketing functions and at the same time they take advantage of mutual technology, development and assembling assets. PSA have had a lot of collaboration agreements with other companies from the industry. There is cooperation with Fiat, Toyota (TPCA, as described here), BMW, Mitsubishi Motors and Ford.³⁹

TPCA management is based on Toyota's system (TPS – Toyota Production System). The basis is the principal of **never ending improvement of standards Kaizen**. Based on company's own words "We all the time improve ourselves and our companies activities to manage and do things better. In practise it means, that development of production systems goes on every day". Any kind of wastes (including defects) are fought with **Jidoka** concept, whose aim is to solve possible problems immediately, so they are not passed through the process. A well known **Just-in-Time** concept organizes supply so that no unnecessary stock is maintained, parts and materials are supplied based on demand from the process at the right time and in right quantity. **Visualization** concept is applied to offer to everybody a chance to be cognizant of production process.⁴⁰

The following paragraphs use answers to my questionnaire and show us how the used managerial technique are perceived by different stakeholders. I used three sources of information, each having personal experience with the company, its managerial style and culture. The first source can be understood as an official company voice – the answers for questionnaire were gathered from Mr. Matěj Matolín, official spokesman of TPCA. The second source, which I understand as an opinion of a middle or lower level employee, are the answers to the questionnaire which was sent to the anonymous moderate "blogger" who founded and maintains www platform for discussions about TPCA (<http://tpca.sblog.cz/>). The third source is information gathered from a really rough blog (<http://ghostrider.blog.cz/0603/tpca-kolin>). It is important to say that I do not see the main value of the answers to questionnaires and especially the value gathered from blog articles only in words included in answers or articles themselves but in context which can be "felt" and understood. Therefore also used rough blog indirectly supplies us with interesting information about company's management and culture. Questionnaires as they were filled by respondents are enclosed in Appendix section.

³⁹ Source: Wikipedia – PSA Peugeot Citroën, www.en.wikipedia.org, November 28, 2007

⁴⁰ Source: TPCA CR, www.tpca.cz, November 28, 2007

3.1.1 Information understood from TPCA official spokesman s answers to the questionnaire

The exact wording of answers for questionnaire questions as they were written by Mr. Matěj Matolín, official TPCA spokesman, can be found in Appendix no.2.

- Used technique is Toyota Production System which includes but is not limited to Just-in-Time, Kaizen, Jidoka, TBP, OJD (On the Job development), 5S.
- Toyota way of management is quite specific and enables company to achieve higher efficiency compared to other companies.
- The techniques used are not antagonistic, contrariwise they complement one another and create the whole – Toyota Production System.
- Main benefit of techniques used is maximization of resources use and minimization or elimination of wastes.
- Based on Mr. Matolín's answer there is no "book of rules", but techniques are handed over through trainings and mainly by OJT (On the job training) and OJD (On the job development).
- There are no specific controls and rules. When techniques are not followed it immediately shows on result
- JIT and other techniques work in line with company's conception, based on Mr. Matolín
- The company is very young and the techniques are new for all employees and techniques have not been mastered by them yet
- Czechs are very flexible and teachable and they try to adopt TPS techniques, but naturally they are limited by small experience compare to Japanese colleagues, who have been learning such techniques all their life
- Employees follow working rules though some techniques and ways of thinking are very new for them
- He likes focus on efficiency, speed and result, although sometimes this way is very demanding.
- There is higher fluctuation between blue-collar workers.
- The bond between employees and company is rather weak. Employees often do not feel as a part of the company.

- Blue-collar employees work in shifts. THP works from 8.30 to 17.00. The amount of overtimes might be higher than in different companies, but always in line with labour code.
- For blue collar employees there is no special training available, they get entrance training and basic working skills training. THP is trained in TPS techniques.
- There are rules for promotion, but more exact description can not be named.
- To strengthen friendships and socialize there are a lot of company events (Family Day, Sporting Day and Christmas Party). All senior employees have funds for team building of their working teams.
- Relationship between employees is fine regardless of nations
- The relationship between superiors and subordinates cannot be generalized for the whole company.
- There are 30 Japanese, 10 French and 20 Czechs in management. Japanese managers have biggest experience with car producing management as well as with TPS application, therefore their number is the highest.
- Japanese mentality is naturally different compare to Czech one and it is the reason for differences in behaviour.
- The company is successful because it produces products of a high quality which has demand and having high efficiency company manages to offer affordable prices of products and have profits at the same time.

3.1.2 Information understood from anonymous blog answers to questionnaire

The exact wording of answers for questionnaire questions as they were sent to me by anonymous www platform for discussions about TPCA founder and administrator (<http://tpca.sblog.cz/>) can be found in Appendix no.3.

Based on the opinion of the anonymous founder and administrator of www platform for discussions about TPCA, the management in company is perceived as follows:

- JIT prevails, besides in paragraph above mentioned techniques, he mentioned 4S (probably was meant 5S)
- There are entrance trainings in techniques (way, how it works in company)
- He believes that actual work gives company 95% satisfaction when compared with its expectations

- In cases when there are problems, the reason is not the system (managerial technique) but people, employees themselves
- He believes that there is a lot of improvisation when talking about JIT
- Regarding 4S (5S), the activities of this concept are performed if line stops early enough before the end of shift, if the line stops in last minute than everybody sees himself/herself home instead
- The company finds faults of employees in not keeping standards, JIT, absences
- The company praises employees for well quality job
- Employees do not like not clear and transparent rules for promotion, as well as some exaggerated rules
- Employees appreciate when company makes the work easier or when the line stops. A lot of people are complaining about everything.
- There is strong tendency to disobey set rules. Not everybody likes given standards of work. Safety rules as wearing of safety glasses or similar are not followed frequently
- Employees appreciate that almost every morning Japanese manager comes to say “Good Morning” to everybody in person
- Employees do not like height of their salaries and promotion schema
- It is a lot of work there, it is expected and necessary to work hard
- Half of employees does not feel to be part of the company
- Length of working day is 10 hours, 41 minutes including 1 hour of brake. Overtimes are assigned by company - based on number of produced cars the shift can be extended by 10 minutes to 1 hour. Whole day overtimes can be approved by managers.
- There are no trainings/education for blue-collar employees. There are only English lessons for GL
- Employees do not understand the rules for promotion, their feeling is that there are really not any objective rules
- There is amount of CZK 800,- yearly per person to support and encourage team spirit. Some employees believe it is waste of money, because people are talking only to same people as usually when working. The provided money are in most cases used to get drunk, only few people vote for other use of the money, but they are always over voted.
- The friendships are also across people from different nations
- The relationship between manager and subordinate depends on people involved

- There is only small number of Japanese management. The majority are Czechs.
- It is difficult to compare Czech and Japanese managers because majority are Czechs
- Many employees believe that there is nothing wrong with the company, that mistakes would have to be looked for. The problems are employees, from which at least half is not following code of conduct. When people change (including Czech management) everything will be OK.
- He has no idea why the company is successful

3.1.3 Information understood from blog articles

(<http://ghost rider.blog.cz/0603/tpca-kolin>)

The last source, that was used to supplement information are articles from “TPCA” blog (<http://ghost rider.blog.cz/0603/tpca-kolin>). Reading those articles is not very optimistic, people writing there are almost always complaining and also the used language is not exactly a polite one. In spite of that interesting information about management of the company can be extracted when reading carefully. In appendix there are some parts of articles which were indicating following findings about some employees’ approach to work. Mentioned parts of articles are copied from blog, therefore they are in its original language (Czech). It seems very likely, that almost all of the articles were written by less qualified employees. The fact that people feels really strongly about company and that, in some cases, they are complaining a lot means that the rules (working morale) is pushed forward and checked by management thoroughly, which has been positive from management side of view.

Following indications can be seen in articles:

- Sometimes it is difficult to differentiate between presenting useful opinion and between complaining
- There are manuals for employees (set of rules)
- Management has helpful approach when solving breaches of rules with employees
- Some employees have low working morals
- There is competitiveness created between employees (shifts) Employees are watching the plan, trying to get more cars produced or just knowing about numbers and taking care
- There is issue whether to prefer quality or quantity
- Company put strong emphasis on high production
- There is strong effort to save costs and eliminate waste

- Employees are consciously or unconsciously accepting management style terminology and habits
- Many times there are different opinions of management and workers what make sense
- It seems like workers are definitely not feeling as a part of the company, in fact in many cases it looks like they do not care at all
- Many employees do not like following rules and listening to orders, they perceive it as unnecessary control and care and people who follow the rules are many times perceive as bootlickers
- Some employees feel like they should have more competence
- It seems like many people are not satisfied with anything and they are trying to excuse their incompetence by complaining about others and everything
- Some of the management plans seems to be pretty difficult to achieve and employees do not like it, and do not seem motivated by such goal
- It is really hard to work there
- It is not easy to get vacation days
- The loyalty is not strong characteristics of many employees
- Many times there is no effort to achieve high quality

3.1.4 Comparison and processing of gathered information

Opinions of TPCA spokesman and anonymous blogger are often very similar, which would indicate that a real situation is described. There is mutual agreement on mayor question, which, in my opinion is, whether the operation of company is in line with company's requirements and expectations. Spokesman states that JIT and other techniques work in line with company's conception. This statement was confirmed by the blogger's opinion that actual work gives company 95% satisfaction when compared with its expectations. Spokesman states that Toyota way of management is quite specific and enables company to achieve higher efficiency compared to other companies using main benefit of TPS, which is maximization of resources use and minimization or elimination of wastes. The blogger confirms that the company's management concept is appropriate in his opinion in case when there are problems in the company, the reason is not the system (managerial technique) but people and by opinion that many employees believe that there is nothing wrong with the company that mistakes would have to be looked for. The problems are employees, from which at least half is not following the code of conduct. When people change (including Czech management) everything will be OK.

Both sources confirmed that there are more managerial techniques used in the company simultaneously (spokesman: TPS, which includes but is not limited to JIT, Kaizen, Jidoka, TBP, OJD (On the Job development), 5S and blogger: JIT prevails, than also Kaizen, 4S (5S likely mentioned) and others.

Based on both sources, the way of working, the rules of respective managerial techniques are transferred to employees through entrance training and mainly by OJT (on the job training) and OJD (on the job development). There are no special trainings or education for blue collar employees.

Rather surprising for me was the answer of spokesman that there is not any "book of rules" which would guide and set up how the used technique should look like and be used and also that there are no specific controls of keeping standards. As indirect confirmation of this statement seems blogger's opinion that there is lot of improvisation when talking about JIT. On other hand blogger wrote, that from some employees there is strong tendency to disobey the rules (standards) and that company finds faults of employees in not keeping standards. Also the common sense indicate that there has to be some set of standards, some "book of rules" because also the entrance training needs to be done according to some procedures.

Hard working is reality and necessary, there is higher turnover among blue-collar employees, employees in many cases do not feel and act as a part of the company, friendships are across people from different nations, relationship between management and employees depends on people involved. These opinions regarding company's operation and culture are almost identical for both official spokesman and anonymous blogger.

Differences in opinions can be found in usefulness of money invested by company to support team spirit as well as there are not same opinions about clarity of rules for promotion. The blogger answered that there is only small number of Japanese management and majority of Czech managers, whilst spokesman answered there is 30 Japanese, 10 French and 20 Czech Managers. The difference is likely to be the cause of different experiences of both persons. It is possible that blogger meets mostly lower level managers, which are likely Czech. The spokesman gave me his idea why TPCA is successful, whilst blogger had no idea.

Using information from answers sent by anonymous blogger and information extracted from TPCA blog I see that the goal of employees is in many times not the best result, but it

is to work not that much. Therefore in some cases they do not follow rules of for example 4S (5S) activities, they do appreciate when company makes work easier or when the line stops. Some people are complaining about everything.

On the other hand it seems to me from information available and contained in this paper, that Japanese management approach is rather helpful. It starts from seemingly not important activities like almost everyday saying “Good Morning” by Japanese manager to everybody in person, continues through praising employees good job and finishing with the effort to solve employees’ issues with tolerance.

Regarding the way how managerial techniques function I understood that there have been some issues. Managerial techniques were originally created by people with different mentality (Japanese). Japanese are also mostly ones, who care about right use and function of used managerial techniques in TPCA. The techniques are new for all employees and techniques have not been mastered by them yet. Spokesman believes that Czechs are very flexible and teachable and they try to adopt TPS techniques, but naturally they are limited by small experience compared to Japanese colleagues, who have been learning such techniques all their lives. Some techniques and ways of thinking are very new for not Japanese employees, in spite of that employees are consciously or unconsciously accepting management style terminology and habits.

3.2 Japanese Manufacturing Company in Automotive Industry

The second company I will use to look at how Japanese managerial techniques work is a Japanese manufacturing company in automotive industry – a car parts producer branch located in the Czech Republic. The mother company is the world leading car part producer, whose aim is to be present in all four major car markets. Branch, which was used is located in Eastern Bohemia and employs approximately 250 employees.⁴¹

The company was founded in Japan on November 19, 1919 and currently employs more than 8000 employees. During its rich history it gathered many certifications and awards, from which I would like to mention the TPM special award (second half of 1990s) and one of the highest awards on TQM in the world the Deming Application Prize for TQS activities (first

⁴¹ The condition for me to get the information on the company was to keep the name of the company confidential in my thesis.

half of 1980s) as well as ISO 9001, 14001 and QS 9000⁴². The company simultaneously uses more managerial techniques listed in this thesis. It applies JIT, 5S and Kaizen.

3.2.1 Information from head of personal department

Based on previous agreement the questionnaire was sent to the head of personal department, which promised to answer it within few days. When respond did not come for a longer time I called for more times asking whether it would be possible to finish the answers and send the questionnaire back to me. The response, again for more times, was yes, we will do it tomorrow. When I called for the last time, the lady (head of personal department) who previously agreed to fill the questionnaire, told me not to count with the answer. As a result there is only one set of answers for questionnaire regarding respective company.

3.2.2 Information understood from higher level employee answers to the questionnaire

- The three techniques are applied within the company independently, in different departments. JIT is especially used in warehouses, i.e. in logistics. 5S and Kaizen are used in all departments, however with different inputs and outputs.
- We cannot say that one technique prevails. They are different so we cannot compare Apples to oranges.
- New employees get the initial information during the first training. They are taught about individual techniques. After the training, each employee fills in a test including questions regarding these techniques (i.e. regarding the training). Then there are regular similar trainings again ending with a test.
- We have Guidelines where all of the techniques are described. It is a document available to all employees on internet.
- Outputs are regularly checked (daily). Stock (system JIT) is controlled daily. Improvements proposals (kaizen) are analyzed weekly. Assembly controls are daily performed (so-called Line patrol controls) – it is monitored whether 5S is adhered to. The outputs of all the techniques are plotted into a chart and regularly analyzed.
- The management goal is to avoid any unnecessary stock (JIT), to keep the workplace clean (5S) and to encourage employees to take part into improvements, to be initiative and creative.
- There are people who follow the rules and of course, there are also those who do not.
- As for 5S, she sees the main difference (problem) in people and their disorderliness. Regarding Kaizen, according to her people are not motivated enough and they do not “breathe” for the company. If the employees are motivated financially, there is a visible progress.

⁴² More information on the TPM Special Award and the Deming Application Prize is given in Glossary.

- If somebody comes with an idea for improvement, they need to fill in a questionnaire. The propounder indicates the respective field for improvement and his supervisors (manager, foreman, production manager) need to express their opinion if the proposal can be considered as an improvement.
- In case of JIT, the most of the administration work is done electronically.
- The rules are described in procedures for individual techniques. Each technique concerns a different field according to ISO norms. That's why JIT is described in logistics guidelines, Kaizen in improvement guidelines and 5S in production guidelines.
- She enjoys working for the company, however, a man needs to realize that Japanese culture, attitude towards the work, towards problem-solving, communication etc. is completely differs completely from our behaviour and culture. One needs to accept it (perhaps even partially adapt oneself) and understand that otherwise it is impossible to work in such a company.
- What she likes about the techniques is that they make work easier, pleasant and they speed it up.
- The turnover is quite high like in any other production company. Production operators – high turnover; foremen, line leaders and supervisors – nearly no turnover; technicians and others – moderate turnover.
- Some employees in technical positions feel to be a part of the company. That counts mostly for those who have a possibility to be promoted soon (or they already know this is going to happen). Talking about “production people”, it is more an exception. It is about attitude and culture of our nation. You can tell people are still stigmatized by the old regime.
- As for the working hours, production is divided into 2 or 3 shifts if necessary from 6.00 to 14.00, sometimes people work 12 hours. Technicians mostly work from 8.00. Working hours are more flexible here and people come in between 7.00 and 9.00. It depends on whether they commute, when they left work the previous day etc.
- If it is necessary to continue with production, two 12 hours-shifts or 3 shifts are applied. Management tries to eliminate overtimes for technicians.
- Employees have the opportunity to take part of external or internal trainings. Internal trainings concern specific jobs on lines, for technicians it is for example working with needed program, system etc. People can apply for an external training at their boss and the management considers it and decides if the training is useful or not.
- Employees also have the opportunity to attend foreign languages courses. This applies for every position except for management – it is assumed that they have already mastered the foreign language. Courses take place at the company premises. They are free of charge, however out of the working hours.
- For each employee there is a training plan with records of which trainings have already been completed and what is ahead (eventually in which intervals).
- Every employee has a chance to be promoted. Of course, they need to meet certain requirements for the given position.

- If there is an opening, it is first offered internally among company's employees. They then have a chance to participate at the selection procedure. There is another possibility – every half a year a few employees are chosen who might be promoted. Those need to go through a “promotion process” where they need to come up with an improvement proposal, prepare a presentation and if the managers consider it as positive, the applicant is promoted.
- We can say that some employees of different nationalities make friends among each other. It is again more about the people. But this counts more for work.
- Relationships between supervisors and subordinates are desired to be good, however it is again more about the people. In my case for example, bad relationship with my supervisor was the reason for me to leave my previous job. Of course, it was not the only reason but one of the main ones.
- Management positions are rarely occupied by “non-Japanese”. In this kind of companies there is a Czech “deputy manager” and Japanese is a director. There is a tendency to start off the company and then when everything works smoothly Japanese managers leave and they are replaced by Czechs. So theoretically deputy managers should become valid managers.
- From time to time even people with other nationalities can execute the management positions – mostly in cases when a new project is started in the Czech Republic and it is a daughter company of an established mother company abroad. A manager comes from this foreign country and runs the same department in the Czech Republic. She has the similar experience with Spanish and Germans. Mostly these were production or engineering managers. According to her the reason is that most of the problems occur in these departments and the managers have more experience than a newly appointed Czech. After some time the Czech manager (or possibly a new Japanese one) replaces the “foreigner's” position. It again depends on the company and its management.
- Czech and Japanese behaviour is very different, it is a completely different mentality, attitude towards work and problem-solving.
- Japanese colleagues really breathe for the company, Czech employees would be more negative, but maybe more honest and concrete.
- There is also a noticeable difference between Japanese and other foreign employees. As already describes, she has experience with three nationalities and each of them is specific. Czech people are skilled, but they often try to evade some things. Germans are cold and precise and they can really tell someone off but they also provide the reasons in a way that one thinks about it and it does not effect further cooperation. Spanish are sometimes lax and “time can wait”. And Japanese, unlike Germans, cannot tell people off and they deal with everything with smile. Which unfortunately sometimes cause that employees do not know what they think and mean by it. If employees do not make a huge mistake, Japanese do not reproach, do not give sanctions and do not fire people.
- She thinks that the main reason of the company's success is that it is a daughter company of one with long tradition and experience so the main task is only to adopt the production system and be at least as good as its mother company.

3.3 Comparison of Researched Companies

Managerial techniques and culture of both examined companies are very similar, in some areas almost identical. Namely answers to questionnaires from all respondents are the same in the information that Japanese culture, attitude towards the work, towards problem-solving, communication etc. is completely different from our behaviour and culture. From answers of all questionnaires and even from TPCA blog articles is clear that one needs to accept cultural difference (perhaps even partially to adapt oneself) and understand that otherwise it is impossible to work in company using Japanese managerial techniques or/and to bring good results to the company.

In the both companies there are more techniques used simultaneously, the turnover of blue collar employees is high, employees on lower positions do not feel as a part of the company, employees of different nationalities make friends among each other, relationships between supervisors and subordinates depend on people involved, Czech people often try to evade some things and Japanese managers cannot tell people off and they deal with everything with smile. If employees do not make a huge mistake, Japanese do not reproach, do not give sanctions and do not fire people.

Although the majority of information gathered from questionnaire was almost the same, there are some differences between the companies in question. One difference is that in second company (other than TPCA) there are clear rules and guidelines for operations and also the results are watched, measured and analyzed regularly. In that company also the rules for promotion seem to be more understandable. Last difference is in chances to gather additional education, while in TPCA there are no other trainings than exactly in the work available, second company gives to employees an opportunity to study language courses.

Reasons for such a big similarity when comparing two researched companies is, as I believe, in the fact that both companies are using similar managerial techniques which, in order to be functional, requires following the same rules. Also the described reactions of employees are similar, because it is response to the same stimulus. The differences are rather results of specific approach of the respective company.

CONCLUSION

Having gone through background information relevant to the answer to my thesis question **What makes Japanese companies, especially management style so successful and competitive**, namely through Context of Japanese Economy and Manners (Chapter 1), Japanese Managerial Techniques (Chapter 2) and Application of the Japanese Management in the Companies (Chapter 3) we come to this, last, chapter concluding based on analysis and summarization of all gathered information. Since the effort was to make conclusion lucid it is rather shorter, not repeating all the information already contained in the paper.

4.1 Contribution of Japanese Management

The impact of Japanese managerial techniques is impressive. Probably the easiest fact to see and also the most self-explanatory fact is that Japan, a relatively small country with almost none natural resources, hit hard by World War II, is today a technological superpower, the second most technologically advanced economy in the world after the US and third largest economy in the world after the US and China⁴³. In my opinion, the reason for such success lies in Japanese people, in their nature and in their manners. Japanese managerial techniques, which are more specific reason for economical success, are their products.

As a specific contribution of Japanese managerial techniques I can as an example name a concept of continuous improvement (Kaizen); effort to eliminate waste and streamline the production process (JIT); identification of the problem and its solving based on statistical and analytical tools, various types of graphical explanation of numerical data, chance to monitor quantify, research and direct behaviour of production over time, (looking at a process using quantitative methods), quality control regarded as a tool to improve managerial performance (TQS); neat, organized and more safe work place (5S); increased office automation, proactiveness in machine repairs and maintenance (TPM). Interdependence and integration of every employee at every level of the company into company's processes is an integral part of most of Japanese managerial techniques and highlighting of its importance is also important contribution.

⁴³ Source: Central Intelligence Agency. World Factbook – Japan. www.cia.gov, November 29, 2006

Another contribution I see in a simple fact that by creating and using of various techniques there is always something what the respective technique is concentrated on. Since the aim of all managerial techniques is to improve productivity, the mentioned concentration on specific parts of company's operations is always beneficial regardless of what specific part is in question. The power of concentration on something is that we are trying to explore the object of concentration, to understand it. By watching it and analyzing we can see development of its performance, we can create standards and watch deviations from those standards, we can set goals tight to those standards, we simply know what respective issue in question is about. And it is very powerful, because when there is something unspecified it is very difficult or impossible to watch it, or to achieve any results tight to it, the progress can not be measured, there is not the goal, there is not the end of the road. On the contrary, when we concentrate on any area of company's activity with aim to improve it, it definitely helps only because of the fact, that we (if issue is communicated properly also to all other stakeholders), have clear idea what to do. (And when we know what to do, we can start with improvements, might be small ones, but whenever it is necessary. Over time everybody will be surprised with what the objects of "small" improvements develop to.)

4.2 Explanation of World Wide Use of Japanese Management

The major reason for the world wide use of Japanese Managerial Techniques has to be the fact that Japanese companies have had good results, which means that their managerial techniques are proven to work well. Japanese managerial techniques brought many new ideas. Also, as a result of its successes, Japanese industry grew a lot, started to have branches at many places all over the world. Branches took "their" management and culture with them and used it abroad. In such branches also local employees were hired, they got familiar with techniques, they probably appreciated techniques function and when they left a company, they took the knowledge with them to other companies. Another reason for using Japanese techniques might come from the customer - supplier relationship. Let us say that customer is a big Japanese company (obviously using Japanese managerial techniques) and supplier wants, needs or is pushed to comply his management practices with customer.

4.3 Anticipated Future Development of Japanese Management

Earlier Japan was more or less in isolation, which also blockaded or slowed down mutual influence of managerial techniques. Nowadays the mutual contacts between many parts of the world are very common, easy and in many cases relatively cheap. As Japanese managerial

styles have had influence in other parts of the world, in a similar way managerial styles and strategies from all over the world influence Japan. As a result, especially in connection with recent Japan economical downturn, Japan is questioning some of its traditional ideas and approaches. Japan is changing so much. Young people keep changing jobs where they can make more money or get better benefits. In contemporary Japan, even a low ranking individual can become a manager if his or her performance is good. Age and rank are strongly connected, however a change in today's business climate means that educational background and ability are often considered over age. Not many people stay in one company any more (my friend Midori is an example). Lifetime employment and seniority concept, the bases of Three Sacred Treasures system which is believed to be one of pillars of Japanese post World War II success, are being abandoned now. Japanese still think that they are a part of society and they do think *wa* is important. However some parents brought today's young adults to be "independent" adults. Not dependant. (Midori)

Looking at history we see that in spite of many challenges, Japan has managed to keep faster or slower growth. Japanese high literacy and education level, strong discipline and hardworking is a very good base for future successes and development. We should also bear in mind, that many Japanese managerial techniques were developed or inspired from existing techniques or concepts of other countries (for example TPS is based on ideas of American statistical consultant Dr. W. Edwards Deming who was invited to give lessons to Japanese on statistical quality control, or Henry Ford's idea of JIT was later adopted and developed by Taiichi Ohno). In many cases, not only within managerial field, Japanese first learned from foreign experts and than they surpassed them. Therefore I believe that successes of Japanese management will not get lost, but techniques will adjust to contemporary and future needs.

4.4 When and Why Japanese Styles Work

Since the utility of Japanese management techniques have been proven in many prosperous Japanese companies it is clear that their application to other companies, even in other parts of the world, makes sense and can bring very good results. At the same time it is very important to be aware of what the components of techniques' success are. In my opinion there are three prerequisites for successful implementation of Japanese managerial techniques. It is firstly a technical side itself (what the technique is about, what it is directed at, means to be used), secondly it is a psychological aspect (learning Japanese management also means learning pieces of Japanese culture and manners

and only if that culture is understood and applied, techniques can show they full potential; people's traits can be seen in all their actions, thus also in management) and thirdly it is hard working. What makes Japanese companies, especially their manner of management so successful and competitive? It is Japanese people traits, which are base for everything else. So once we accept that Japanese are successful it is worth getting to know them better. It is worth considering whether some traits should not be adopted or at least understood.

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GLOSSARY

Meiji period (1868-1912)

– characterized by modernization of the nation owed to support of Western countries. It is also well-known for the revocation of the Shogunate and for the abolishment of samurai class.

Special Award for TPM Achievement

– It is an award given out by Japan Institute of Plant Maintenance based on the results of company's Total Productive Maintenance activities. To be able to compete for the prize, a company must meet certain requirements that can be found on JIPM official webpage under link http://www.jipm.or.jp/en/data/071113_2.pdf.

The Deming Prize

– The Deming Prize is one of the highest awards on TQM (Total Quality Management) in the world. It was established in 1951 in commemoration of the late Dr. William Edwards Deming who contributed greatly to Japan's proliferation of statistical quality control after the World War II. The Prize is given to organizations or divisions of organizations that have achieved distinctive performance improvement through the application of TQM in a designated year⁴⁴.

⁴⁴ Source: Japanese Union of Scientists and Engineers,, http://www.juse.or.jp/e/deming/pdf/deminggide2007_01.pdf, December 5, 2007

APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Questionnaire (blank)

According to information available to me, you use Just-in-Time managerial technique in TPCA / KYB Manufacturing Czech.

- Are there any other techniques you use (e.g. 5S, Total Productive Maintenance, Kaizen etc.) or is it the only one?
 - If you use more of them, are they used simultaneously, i.e. for the same processes or does each technique cover a certain area? If used separately, how are the techniques divided?
 - Is there a difference in a company management when Japanese techniques are in use or is it the same as in a regular Czech company?
 - Can you say that one technique outweighs?
 - Could you please briefly describe used technique(s)?
 - What do you consider as the most beneficial feature on the used technique(s)?

- How are the principles of the above mentioned techniques introduced to new and current employees?
 - Is there any “Book of Rules” or “Company Guidelines”?
 - Or/and is there anyone within the company who conveys and controls the rules (principles)?
 - If there is such “Book of Rules” or “Company Guidelines”, is it possible to obtain a copy or to borrow it?

- How does the company imagine the correct functioning of JIT and/or other used techniques?
 - Does it work according to the company’s requirements and ideas?
 - If not, what are the differences or where does the problem lie?
 - Does the functioning of the techniques include a lot of administration (rules)?
 - Are the contingent rules detailed?
 - Are the contingent rules strict or is it possible to improvise?
 - How is the observance of the rules controlled?
 - How does the company perceive work of (mostly Czech?) employees?
 - If Czech employees do not prevail, could you please briefly describe the structure of employees (as for nationality).
 - What does the company mostly criticize (on employees’ work)?
 - What does the company praise the employees for?
 - Are there differences in praise and reproof for individual nationalities, i.e. is it possible to observe any specific features of individual nationalities?
 - How do (mostly Czech?) employees perceive the way and organization of work?
 - If Czech employees do not prevail, could you please briefly describe whether there are differences in attitudes of different nationalities?
 - What do they not like?
 - What do they appreciate?
 - Do the employees adhere to the rules?

- Do you personally enjoy working in the company?
 - What do you like?
 - What not?
- What is the employees' turnover (fluctuation)?
 - Is it similar for every position?
- Do the employees feel to be a part of the company?
- What is the employees' assignment and what are the working hours?
 - How about e.g. overtimes?
- Is there any educational system for employees?
 - If so, what does it look like?
 - Are the employees willing to educate themselves?
- Are there any rules for employees' promoting?
 - If so, which are they?
- How do you strengthen the team?
 - Do only same nationalities get on together or do employees make friends among each other regardless nationality?
- What are the relationships among superiors and subordinates?
- What is the proportion of management in terms of nationalities?
 - What is the percentage of Japanese managers?
 - Are there Czechs on management positions?
 - Which nationality is mostly represented? What do you think is the reason for that?
- Can you see a difference in Czech and Japanese employees' behaviour?
 - What do you consider the main differences?
 - Is there a difference between Japanese employees and other foreigners within the company (what is the difference and what are the nationalities)?
- Should there be anything distinctive issue or anything you consider important, please feel free to write your comments.
- Why do you think the company prospers?

Appendix 2: Questionnaire filled in by Mr. Matěj Matolín, the spokesman of TPCA

Dle informací, které mám k dispozici, používáte v TPCA manažerskou techniku Just-in-Time.

- Používáte jenom tuto nebo i jiné? (např. 5S, Total Productive Maintenance apod.)
 - Pokud jich používáte více, používáte je současně, tzn. na stejné procesy nebo každá technika pokrývá určitou oblast? Případně jak rozděleno?

Používáme techniky Toyota Production Systém jehož součástí je mimo jiné JIT, Kaizen, Jidoka, TBP, OJD, 5S a jiné

- Je použitím dané techniky (technik) vidět rozdíl, nebo Vám řízení společnosti připadá podobné jako kdekoli jinde?

Způsob řízení Toyota je velmi specifický a umožňuje firmě větší efektivitu oproti jiným firmám.

- Je možné říct, že jedna z technik převažuje?

Tyto techniky nestojí proti sobě, ale vzájemně se doplňují a tvoří jeden celek, kterým je Toyota Production Systém.

- Prosíme stručně popište používané techniky.

Omlouvám se, ale popis těchto technik byl sám zabral několik stránek.

- Co je na použité (použitých) technice nejprínosnějšího?

Viz. odpověď výše, ale celkově jde o co nejefektivnější využívání zdrojů a eliminaci zbytečností a ztrát.

- Jak jsou noví a stávající zaměstnanci seznamováni s principy uvedených technik?
 - Existuje nějaká „kniha pravidel“ nebo „směrnice“?
 - a/nebo někdo, kdo pravidla (principy) sděluje a kontroluje?
 - Pokud existuje „kniha pravidel“ nebo „směrnice“, je možné tuto získat nebo si ji zapůjčit?

Kniha pravidel neexistuje, vědomosti a techniky jsou předávány prostřednictvím školení a zejména OJT (On the job training) a OJD (On the job development)

- Jak si představuje firma, že se má správně pracovat – jak si společnost představuje správné fungování JIT případně dalších technik?
 - Funguje to dle požadavků a představ společnosti?
Ano.
 - Jestli ne, v čem jsou odlišnosti nebo problémy?

Naše firma je velmi mladá a pro všechny zaměstnance jsou tyto techniky nové a ještě si je zcela neosvojili.

- Zahrnuje fungování technik hodně administrativy (pravidel)?
 - Jsou případná pravidla detailní?
 - Jsou případná pravidla striktní nebo je možné “improvizovat”?
 - Jak se kontroluje dodržování pravidel?

Neexistují specifické kontroly a pravidla. Nedodržování technik se samo okamžitě objeví na výsledku.

- Jak vnímá firma práci (převážně českých?) zaměstnanců?
 - Pokud nepřevažují čeští zaměstnanci, prosím přibližně popsat skladbu.
 - Co jim případně společnost vytýká?
 - Nebo za co je chválí?
 - Liší se případně výtky a chvála pro jednotlivé národnosti, tzn. jestli je možné vyzorovat určité specifické vlastnosti jednotlivých národností?

Češi jsou velmi flexibilní a učenlivý a snaží se přijmout techniky TPS, ale přirozeně je limituje malá zkušenost oproti japonským kolegům, kteří se tyto techniky učí celý život.

- Jak vnímají (převážně čeští?) zaměstnanci způsob a organizaci práce?
 - Pokud nepřevažují čeští zaměstnanci, prosím přibližně popsat skladbu a jestli se názory různých národností liší.
 - Co jim vadí?
 - Co oceňují?
 - Dodržují pracovníci případná pravidla?

Ano, dodržují i když některé techniky a způsoby myšlení jsou pro ně velmi nové.

- Je pro Vás osobně příjemné ve firmě pracovat?
 - Co se Vám líbí?
 - Co naopak ne?

Ano, líbí se mi orientace na efektivitu, rychlost a výsledek. Někdy je tento způsob práce však velmi vyčerpávající.

- Jaká je fluktuace ve firmě?
 - Je to shodné pro všechny pozice?

Přesné číslo nezveřejňujeme. Fluktuace je vyšší na dělnických pozicích; u THP je poměrně nízká.

- Cítí se být zaměstnanci součástí firmy?

Jsme mladá firma, která nemá takovou tradici jako etablované průmyslové podniky jako například Škoda Auto a proto pouto mezi zaměstnanci a firmou je poměrně slabé.

- Jaké je pracovní nasazení a jaká je pracovní doba?
 - Např. přesčasů?

Pro dělnické profese je směnný režim. THP pracují od 8.30 do 17.00. Množství přesčasů je možná vyšší než v jiných firmách, vždy ale v souladu se zákoníkem práce.

- Je nějaký systém vzdělávání pro zaměstnance?
 - Případně jaký?
 - Mají zaměstnanci snahu se vzdělávat?

Pro dělnické profese je pouze vstupní školení a školení základních pracovních dovedností. Pro THP jsou školení na techniky TPS

- Jsou nějaká pravidla pro povyšování zaměstnanců?
 - Případně jaká?

Ano jsou, bližší popis nemohu uvést.

- Máte ráno rozcvičku? Nosí zaměstnankyně červené odznaky, když mají své dny? :-)

Ne.

- Jak utužujete kolektiv?

Máme celofiremní akce (FamilyDay, Sportovní den a vánoční party). Každý nadřízený má finanční zdroje na team building pro svůj pracovní tým.

- “Kamarádi” se dohromady jenom stejné národnosti nebo i navzájem?

Myslím, že vzájemné vztahy mají dobré.

- Jaké jsou vztahy mezi nadřízenými a podřízenými?

Na tuto otázku nemohu odpovědět paušálně za celou firmu.

- Jaké je obsazení manažerských funkcí z hlediska národností?
 - Jaké je asi procento Japonců.
 - Jsou Češi v managementu?
 - Která národnost je v managementu nejvíce zastoupena? Co si myslíte, že je důvodem?

V managementu je 30 Japonců, 10 Francouzů a 20 Čechů. Je to logické, protože zejména manažeři Toyoty mají daleko větší zkušenosti s řízením automobilky a aplikací TPS

- Je rozdílné chování českých a japonských zaměstnanců?
 - V čem vidíte hlavní rozdíly?

Je rozdíl mezi Japonci a jinými ve firmě přítomnými cizinci? (jaký a jaké jsou národnosti?)

Japonská mentalita je pochopitelně odlišná od České a z toho pramení rozdílnosti v chování. Díky vzájemnému respektu a pochopení jsme schopni tyto odlišnosti bez problémů překonat.

- Napište, prosím, cokoli, co na Vás z této tematiky výrazně působí nebo co Vám připadá důležité.
- Proč si myslíte, že se firmě daří?

Firmě se daří, protože vyrábí kvalitní produkt po kterém je poptávka a díky vysoké efektivitě je schopna dosáhnout příznivé ceny výrobku a zároveň ziskovosti.

Appendix 3: Questionnaire filled in by the TPCA platform founder and administrator

Psal jste, ze používate JIT, 5S a kaizen.

- Znamená to tedy, že používáte všechny tři techniky současně?
 - da se říct, že jedna z nich převládá? **Ano, používají se současně. Samozřejmě převládá JIT**
- Jak jsou noví a stávající zaměstnanci seznamováni s principy uvedených technik?
 - existuje nějaká "kniha pravidel"? **Určitě něco takového bude, jelikož při vstupních školení se musí z něčeho vycházet.**
 - a/nebo někdo, kdo pravidla (principy) sděluje a kontroluje?
- Jak si představuje firma, že se má správně pracovat – jak si představují správné fungování JIT, 5S a kaizen?
 - funguje to dle jejich požadavku a představ? **Dle mého názoru tak na 95%**
 - jestli ne, v čem jsou odlišnosti nebo problémy? **Problém jsou pracovníci samotní**
 - zahrnuje fungování technik hodně administrativy (pravidel)?
 - jsou případná pravidla detailní? **Nikdy jsem tato pravidla neviděl, takže nemohu posoudit**
 - jsou případná pravidla striktní nebo je možné "improvizovat"? **Co se týče JIT, tak se dle mého názoru dost improvizuje. Co se týče 4S, tak pokud se před koncem zastaví linka, tak TM na lince provedou 4S. Pokud se ovšem linka zastaví až v poslední minutě, každý už se vidí doma.**
 - jak vnímá firma práci (převážně českých) zaměstnanců?
 - co jim případně vytká? **Nedodržování standardu, JIT, absence**
 - nebo za co je chvalí? **Kvalitně odvedená práce**
 - jak vnímají (převážně cizí) zaměstnanci způsob a organizaci práce?
 - co jim vadí? **Nejasná a nepřehledná pravidla pro povyšování, pro některé přehnaná pravidla**
 - co ocení? **Asi to, když jim fabrika zjednoduší práci, nebo když zastaví linka. Mám kolem sebe lidi, co snad na vše nadávají, takže co oceňují nevím.**
 - dodržují pracovníci případná pravidla? **Spíše se je snaží nějak obejít. Ne každému vyhovuje daný standard práce, který je daný. Často obcházejí pravidla bezpečnosti, jako jsou brýle a špunty do uší.**
- Je pro Vás osobně příjemné ve firmě pracovat?
 - co se Vám líbí? **To, že mě a všechny zaměstnance na lince téměř každé ráno obejde Japonský manager a pozdraví každého z nás osobně.**

co naopak ne? **Jako asi každému výše základní mzdy. Je to sice na poměry české republiky dostatečný plat ale co se týče v poměru**

- vykonané práce, tak je to málo. Dále potom Povyšování zaměstnanců do vyšší platové třídy. Jsem v TPCA více jak 2 roky ale mám stejný základní plat jako ten co právě nastoupí a teprve se učí.
- Jaka je fluktuace ve firme?
- Citi se byt zamestnanci soucasti firmy? Dle mého názoru tak 50% ne
- Jake je pracovni nasazeni a jaka je pracovni doba?
 - co napr. prescasny? Pracovní doba je 10 hodin a 41 minut včetně 1 hodiny přestávky. Přesčasny určuje zaměstnavatel dle vyrobených počtu vyrobených aut prodlouží směnu o 10 minut až 1 hodinu. Celodenní přesčasny povolují také manažeri.
- Je nejaky system vzdelavani pro zamestnance?
 - pripadne jaky? Ano ale pouze pro GL jsou k dispozici kurzy Angličtiny. Řadový zaměstnanci ne.
- Jsou nejaka pravidla pro povysovani zamestnancu?
 - pripadne jaka? Ano ale nejsou průhledná ani nijak přesně daná. Dle názorů lidí se povyšují jak se jim to hodí
- Mate rano rozcvicku? Nosi zamestnankyne cervene odznaky, kdyz maji sve dny? ;-) NE
 - Jak utuzujete kolektiv? Zaměstnavatel poskytuje ročně částku 800Kč na hlavu pro utužování kolektivu. Dle mého názoru je to na nic, jelikož se na pořádaných akcích kolektivu lidé baví zase pouze s těmi co jsou kamarádi i na lince. Pravidlem je, že se za ty peníze stejně udělá tzv. Chlastačka. Jen málo lidí je pro jinou akci a tak je vždy přehlasováno většinou kolektivu na tu tzv.chlastačku.
 - “Kamaradi” se dohromady jenom stejne narodnosti nebo i navzajem? Dle mého názoru navzájem.
- Jake jsou vztahy mezi nadřizenými a podrizenými? Toto nelze jednoznačně určit jelikož vztahy se liší podle lidí.
- Jsou “ne-Japonci” v manazerskych funkcich?
 - jestli ano, v jakem pomeru? Ano, ve velkém poměru. Ve fabrice je jen pár japonců. Jinak je tam český management
 - jsou to Cesi nebo jina narodnost? – jaka?
- Je rozdilne chovani ceskych a japonskych zamestnancu? Nelze posoudit, jelikož je zde převážně český management
 - jak by se tedy lisily odpovedi na vyse uvedene otazky pro Cechy a pro cizince?
 - je rozdíl mezi Japonci a jinými případnými cizinci? (jaky a jake jsou narodnosti?)
- Dale napiste prosim cokoli, co na Vas z teto oblasti vyrazne pusobi nebo co Vam pripada dulezite. Proti Fabrice bych toho moc neměl. Musel bych doslova hledat chyby. Problém vidím v lidech. Minimálně polovina nejsou schopni dodržovat ani základní pravidla lidského chování. Až se změní lidé pak bude vše OK. Samozřejmě do toho spadá i český management
- Proc si myslite, ze se firme dari? Toto nedokáži jen tak bohužel posoudit.

Appendix 4: Parts of articles from the internet blog <http://ghost rider.blog.cz/0603/tpca-kolin>

A to, že je v nějaký příručce pro zamestnance psany, ze každej ma právo na svůj nazor atd. TAK TO SOU NEHORAZNY KECY--TAM PLATÍ MAKEJ, NEBO JDI DO HAJZLU (DRŽ KROK A HUBU A BUDES SE MIT DOBRE

Dneska vyjelo z linky půlmilionté auto! Pěkně! Půlhodinový linestop a vymakaná show, no jo...

Dobrý, až a to že sme pak měli ještě 10 minut přesčas. Někdo se asi udeřil do hlavy...

Nějaké pohovory nebo co to bylo opravdu nejsou výmluva - nevím který jiný zaměstnavatel by ti tohle trpěl

A místo toho, aby jsi měl plnou hubu keců, jsi se mohl od ostatních učit (i když na "C" - od koho ?) a ne jen někde posedávat a nebo doma chrápat nebo běhat po pohovorech v pracovní době.

ti kokoti na lakovně na směně C si hrajou jako by byli nejlepší.

kvalita aspoň 95% co se ještě nikdy nestalo. Když se posere robot nezastaví se linka auta jedou dál to je moto téhle fabriky jenom at' to jede ale jedno jak

To je jak z kaizenama uznávané jsou jen ty co pomůžou výrobě ale co pomohou lidem méně práce o tom nechcous ani slyšet a ještě když to stojí moc peněz

jo jo kvalita je na prvním místě (každý o tom víme své), ale když máme tak našlapaný plán tak je logické, že se linka nesmí často zastavovat.

Prý je o naše auta velký zájem a dobře se prodávají. To je docela v pořádku, ale nechápu proč by zákazník nemohl počkat o týden navíc...

ničeho se neboj dá se to zvládnout, záleží jen na jedinci jak se tomu režimu podá

a když k tomu připočítám i to co jsem musel zaplatit TPCA když jsem odešel po pěti měsících

Včera nám dali 10 minutový přesčas, protože jsme nesplnili plán vyrobených aut (chybělo nám asi 5 aut). Dnes nařídili dvouhodinový linestop. Jen tak. Měli sme uklízet, opravovat různé věci na lince a tak podobně... Jo pořádek musí být, ale proč jsme těch pět "zmeškaných" vozů nemohli udělat dnes?!?!?

Za ty dva roky, co jsem v tý fabrice hnil, jsem měl hodněkrát možnost poznat, že logické myšlení a TPCA (hlavně lidi ve vedení) prostě nejdou dohromady

Ale když jsem tam, tak jenom čekám kdy už bude konec.

----a o 100% víc buzerace

Jsou místa, kde bych třeba nevydržel, ale jsou taky takové, kde člověk nedělá skoro nic - za ty samé peníze.

Osobně jsem někde uprostřed. Při práci si čtu. Sem tam skočím na kafe :)

každé kolečko, podpis v papírech, kde jaká blbost musela být přesně podle předpisů, každý detail řešili

Pozor na to! 1716Kč je první finanční chyták ze strany TPCA, potom následují ubytovny, Z konta atd.

vše tu řídí GL, SV, MGR a výše, nemůžete si tu pomalu ani prdnout

Nejlépe se tu mají TL a výše, kteří se radoby chovají kamarádsky, ale jsou to jen přetvářky (jsou to svině).

Jo ty benefity, to je taky pěkný hovno. Nejlepší je tu držet hubu a makat. Pokud chcete nějakou kariéru, tak musíte být pěkná ženská nebo řit'olez a podrazák, ale to je všude stejný, pak taky to tak vypadá, když vám rozkazuje krypl, který nic neumí

Zdárek Killer já tam byl pouhý měsíc a opravdu mě to stačilo, to co jsem tam viděl a zažil se nedá srovnávat snad s ničím. A že sem na to koukal pěkně s hora. Ty upocený GL, SV atd tam tomu dávaj pěknou sodu a novinou určitě nebude fakt že je to vše o donášení a podlejzání. Na tomto stojí celá morálka od 601 až po lakovnu. Japončící a Frantíci maj s toho akorád pěknou prdel a nestačej se divit co sme to za hajzli!!!!

Musí jim tam nahoře pěkně je*at, když vymysleli plán 562 vozů za směnu!!!! Už nevím co bych na to řekl, jen nevěřičně kroutím hlavou....

výrobek z TPCA se ke své finální podobě a spokojenosti zákazníka dá několika násobně OJEBAT!!!!!!!!!!

jak jde o práci, tak krypl a kancelářskej blb se vždycky ozve

já pořád mluvím o 10% lidí na lince, hodně lidí je dobrých a je s nima velká spokojenost, protože dělaj to co maj, a tak se k ním také chováme. Jenom, že jsou tam tací, co jim musíme říct 100 co maj dělat a oni stejně říkaj, že to není pravda takhle je to lépe, a dělaj spousty závad a pořád si stěžujou. Mám pravdu, nebo ne?

máš v palici nalito to co musíš a za co seš placenej

Nikdy to nebude tak, že všichni budou dělat všechno tak jak se má podle předpisů

ABY TOVÁRNA FUNGOVOLA TAK PŘEDEVŠÍM MUSÍ BÝT SPOKOJENÝ ZAMĚSTNANEC A TO ZAČÍNÁ PRÁVĚ OD TĚ LINKY. Tak kde je vlastně ta chyba? Proč zaměstnanci přichází a odchází? Jasně chyba je od supervisoru až po directora. A na závěr : komunikace a komunikace. Good bye

práce je to šílená, nezáživná, člověk se cítí jako robot a peníze opravdu vydřené, když se k tomu přidají další věci jako prezentace společnosti venku, špatná politika vůči vlastním zaměstnancům, fluktuace lidí, doslova žebrání o dovolenou, šílený jídlo, zdravotní potíže ze stereotypních pohybů, žádná společenská odpovědnost firmy vůči okolí atd

Muj kamoš si jeden lohnul domu

a to posedávání když tě nechají být a neřeknou ti co máš dělat tak co máš dělat?
To že si tam hledjí místečka kde se můžou vychrápat přes noc a ne jen TM tak to je dost dost demotivující

Jen je problém když člověk potřebuje dovolenou

Jinak dneska vyrobeno 593 vozítek! Naprosté šílenství! Uffff! Kam se to až vyšplhá???

Uff dneska v noci jsme vážně zabodovali...

vyrobeno 149 autíček!!!!

To je rekord nee??

My 0 slovy nula takže tento rok je to vážně rekord a asi nepřekonatelný :)

Jedna směna 150 a druhá 0?!?!?

je zaměstnancům jedno co se tam vyrábí za "šmejdy". Nezdá se vám nikomu divná představa pracovat pro nějakou firmu a zároveň být přesvědčen, že to co děláte je pro vás osobně k ničemu a že jste jen levnější náhrady za roboty

Appendix 5: Questionnaire filled in by an Employee of Japanese Manufacturing Company in Automotive Industry

Psala jsi, ze pouzivate JIT, 5S a kaizen.

- Znamená to teda, ze pouzivate vsechny tri techniky soucasne?

Ne, neznamená. Tyto tři techniky používáme nezávisle na sobě. Jde o techniky, které se užívají různě v různých odděleních. JIT třeba především ve skladech, tedy v logistice. 5S a Kaizen ve všech odděleních, ale s různými vstupy a výstupy.

- da se říct, ze jedna z nich prevazuje?

Takto to říci nelze – viz odpověď výše. Jde o různé techniky, nelze je míchat dohromady jako jablka a hrušky.

- Jak jsou novi a stavající zaměstnanci seznamováni s principy uvedených technik?

První informaci zaměstnanci dostávají již při vstupním školení. Zde jsou proškoleni o jednotlivých technikách. Po ukončení školení zaměstnanci vyplní test, kde jsou též otázky vztahující se k těmto technikám, tedy ke školení o nich. Poté následují obdobná školení v pravidelných periodách a výstupem je opět vyplněný test.

- existuje nějaká “kniha pravidel”?

Existuje směrnice, ve které jsou jednotlivé techniky popsány. Jde o řízený dokument přístupný všem zaměstnancům na intranetu.

- a/nebo někdo, kdo pravidla (principy) sděluje a kontroluje?

Zaměstnanci jsou s principy seznamováni během školení. Výstupy jsou pravidelně hodnoceny a to denně. Denně se sledují skladové zásoby, tedy systém JIT. Týdně se vyhodnocují návrhy na zlepšení, tedy Kaizen. Denně probíhají na linkách tzv. Line patrol kontroly, kdy se sleduje, zda pracovníci dodržují 5S. Toto je sledováno v grafech a pravidelně vyhodnocováno – všechny techniky. Sleduje se tedy trend jak se pohybují zásoby – JIT, jak vycházejí kontroly na linkách – 5S a jaký je stav co do počtu návrhů na zlepšení – Kaizen.

- Jak si představuje firma, ze se má správně pracovat – jak si představují správné fungování JIT, 5S a kaizen?

JIT – aby nevznikaly zbytečná přezásobení materiálem.

5S – aby byl pořádek na pracovišti

Kaizen – aby lidé měli snahu se účastnit na jednotlivých zlepšeních, sami byli iniciativní a tvůrčí

- funguje to dle jejich požadavku a představ?

Asi jako v každé jiné firmě. Jsou jedinci, kteří toto dodržují, ale jsou i ti druzí.

- jestli ne, v čem jsou odlišnosti nebo problémy?

5S – v lidech a jejich nepořádnosti

Kaizen – lidé stále nejsou dostatečně motivováni a nemají ten pocit, aby pro ně firma byla vším a dýchali za ni, pokud jsou zaměstnanci motivováni finančně, snaží se a je viditelný progres

- zahrnuje fungování technik hodne administrativy (pravidel)?

V případě, že někdo podá návrh na zlepšení, musí se k tomu vyplnit příslušný formulář. Navrhovatel vyplní oblast pro návrh a jeho nadřízený (manager, mistr, vedoucí výroby atd.) se k tomuto musí vyjádřit, zda-li lze návrh brát za zlepšení a lze jej nějakým způsobem ocenit.

V případě JIT většina administrativy probíhá elektronicky.

- jsou případná pravidla detailní?

Vše je popsáno v procedurách k jednotlivým technikám. Každá technika se dle ISO norem týká zcela něčeho jiného. Proto JIT je popsáno ve směrnici pro logistiku, Kaizen ve směrnici pro proces zlepšování a 5S je popsáno ve směrnici pro výrobu.

- jsou případná pravidla striktní nebo je možné “improvizovat”?

Nerozumím otázce.

- Je pro tebe osobně příjemné ve firmě pracovat?

Ano. I když člověk musí brát v potaz, že japonská kultura, přístup k práci, k řešení problémů, komunikaci atd. je zcela odlišný od našeho chování a kultury. Člověk toto musí akceptovat a pochopit, částečně se možná i přizpůsobit, jinak nelze v takovéto firmě pracovat.

- co se ti líbí?

Ve firmě nebo na technikách popsaných výše?

Když bych se měla vyjádřit k technikám, tak rozhodně to, že nějakým způsobem ulehčují, usnadňují, zrychlují či jinak zpříjemňují práci.

- co naopak ne?

Viz otázka výše.

- Jaka je fluktuace ve firmě?

Jako v každé výrobní firmě poměrně vysoká. Operátoři ve výrobě – vysoká, mistři, line leadři, supervizoři – není, technici a ostatní přiměřená, fluktuace je spíše na technických pozicích než v administrativě.

- Cítí se být zaměstnanci součástí firmy?

Někteří na technických pozicích ano. Jsou to spíše Ti, kteří vědí, že v nejbližší době mají možnost nebo budou povýšeni. Pokud mluvíme o lidech z výroby, je to spíše výjimka. To je ale jako v každé jiné firmě. Je to o přístupu a výchově našeho národa. Je zde znát, že jsou stále lidé poznamenaní starým režimem.

- Jaka je pracovní nasazení a jaka je pracovní doba?

Toto je opět trendem téměř ve všech firmách a to tak, že ve výrobě se pracuje dle potřeb na 2 nebo 3 směny a to od šesti do dvou atd., někdy jedou dvanáctky. Technici a spol. většinou pracují od osmi hodin. Zde je doba pružnější a lidé chodí mezi sedmou až devátou. Záleží na tom, zda dojíždějí, jak byli dlouho v práci předešlý den atd.

- co např. přesčas?

Opět jako všude jinde. Potřebuje-li výroba vyrábět, jede se místo dvou směn na dvanáctky nebo třeba na tři směny. U techniků se snaží přesčasy eliminovat. Toto není trend.

- Je nějaký systém vzdělávání pro zaměstnance?

Zaměstnanci mají možnost účastnit se externích či interních školení. Interní školení se týkají konkrétní práce ve výrobě na linkách, u techniků třeba práce s potřebným programem, systémem atd. O externí školení lze zažádat u nadřízeného a záleží na posouzení managementu, zda-li školení uznají za potřebné či nikoli.

Zaměstnanci též mají možnost účastnit se kurzů cizího jazyka a to na všech pozicích vyjma manažerských – u těch se předpokládá, že jazyk ovládají na dostatečné úrovni. Kurzy probíhají přímo ve firmě, kam pravidelně dochází lektor. Jsou bezplatné, ale mimo pracovní dobu.

- případně jaky?

Personální oddělení má pro každého zaměstnance zpracovaný plán školení, kde je uvedeno co již absolvoval, co teprve bude absolvovat popř. v jakých intervalech.

- Jsou nějaká pravidla pro povyšování zaměstnanců?

Každý zaměstnanec má možnost být povýšen. Musí samozřejmě splňovat požadavky na danou pozici. případně jaka?

- Máte ráno rozčvicku? Nosí zaměstnankyne červené odznaky, když mají své dny? ;-)

- Jak utuzujete kolektiv?

Je-li vyhlášeno volné místo, nabídne se nejprve interně mezi zaměstnanci firmy. Ti mají možnost se účastnit výběrových řízení. Další možností je, že každý půlrok jsou vytipováni zaměstnanci, kteří by mohli jít o stupeň a více výš. Ti musejí projít tzv. promotion, kdy musí navrhnout nějaký zlepšovák, udělat k tomu prezentaci a

pokud porota sestavená z managerů toto hodnotí jako pozitivní a žadatel je přesvědčí, je povýšen.

- “Kamarádi” se dohromady jenom stejne narodnosti nebo i navzajem?
Do určité míry ano. Opět je to o lidech. Toto ale spíše v práci a po pracovní stránce. Třeba na obědy si chodí každý se „svými“.

- Jake jsou vztahy mezi nadřizenými a podřizenými?

Samozřejmě, že snahou je, aby byly dobré, ale opět záleží na lidech a jak si kdo sedne. V mém případě jsem třeba kvůli ne dobrým vztahům se svým nadřízeným odešla ze zaměstnání. Nebyl to samozřejmě jediný důvod, ale jeden z těch hlavních.

- Jsou “ne-Japonci” v manažerských funkcích?

Převážně ne. V takovýchto firmách je jakýsi deputy manager a to Čech a na funkci managera je většinou japonský kolega. Trend je takový, že až se firma rozjede, japonská manažerka odejde a firmu si budou řídit čeští. Takže z deputy managerů by se do budoucna měli stát právoplatní manažerka.

- jestli ano, v jakem poměru?

Viz odpověď výše.

- jsou to Česi nebo jiná národnost? – jaká?

Občas mohou zastávat manažerské funkce i lidé jiné národnosti a to většinou v těch případech, kdy se rozjede nový projekt v Česku a má matku, která má už několikaletou praxi, z této firmy v cizině přijde manager, který tam byl třeba ve výrobě a začne šéfovat v tom samém oddělení v Čechách. Má zkušenost je takto s Němci Španěly. Většinou šlo v těchto případech o managery z výroby nebo engineeringu. Dle mého názoru právě proto, že tam je nejvíce problémů a oni díky své praxi měli daleko lepší a rychlejší řešení než by měl na takovéto pozici Čech, který by byl v nové firmě nový. Po určité době, kdy se firma zaběhne, na takovouto pozici, kterou zastával jiný cizinec ne-Japonec, většinou přechází manager český popř. nový z Japonska. Opět záleží na firmě a jejím vedení.

- Je rozdílné chování českých a japonských zaměstnanců?

Ano, je to zcela rozdílná mentalita, tedy přístup k práci, řešení problémů aj.

- jak by se tedy lišily odpovědi na výše uvedené otázky pro Čechy a pro cizince?
Japonská kolegyně by odpovídala tak, že by z toho bylo patrné, že za firmu dýchají, ale možná by to bylo neupřímné. Troufám si říci, že kdyby odpovídal Čech, bylo by to více negativistické, ale i možná více upřímné a konkrétní.

- je rozdíl mezi Japonci a jinými případnými cizinci? (jaký a jaké jsou národnosti?)

Ano, je zde rozdíl a to markantní. Jak jsem popsala výše, mám zkušenost se třemi národnostmi a každá je zcela rozdílná. Češi jsou šikovni, koumáci, ale občas se snaží věci „očůrat“. Němci jsou chladni a precizni, dokážou člověku hodně vynadat, ale vysvětlí důvod výčitek tak, že člověk nad tím chvíli přemýšlí a nemá to nějaký vliv na další spolupráci. Španělé jsou občas laxni a práce počká. A Japonci na rozdíl od Němců nedokáží člověku vynadat a vše řeší s úsměvem na tváři. Z toho ale vychází to, že člověk nikdy neví, co si myslí a jak to myslí. Pokud člověk neudělá nějaký giga průšvih, tak Japonci nekárají, nesankcionují ani nevyhazují z práce.

- Plus napis prosim cokoli, co na tebe z této oblasti vyrazne pusobi nebo co ti pripada dulezite.

- Proc si myslis, ze se firme dari?

Vždy jsem dělala ve firmě s několikaletou tradicí. Šlo o firmy, které byly dcerami matek, které byly léta zaběhlé a měly několikaletou praxi a tradici, takže šlo pouze o to převzít výrobu a být minimálně stejně tak dobré jako jejich matky.