Building a change-resilient “Monozukuri” system that NTN aims for

In recent years, we have been facing a rapidly changing and unpredictable business environment, including large-scale natural disasters and the cessation of global economic activities due to the new coronavirus (COVID-19). At the same time, business conditions are rapidly changing, including customer needs, and the speed of processes from product planning, including marketing, to prototyping and mass production will be the key to improving customer satisfaction in the future.

Under these circumstances, we will strengthen the linkage between the innovation process of product planning and development and the supply chain process of marketing, production, and sales, with the aim of establishing a “Monozukuri” system that is resilient to changes.

Organizational change of the Procurement Headquarters

In order to strengthen global procurement and centralized purchasing and achieve Variable Cost Reformation through centralized management led by the head office, the Procurement Headquarters was reorganized into 3 departments: the Global Procurement Supervising Department, the Japan Region Procurement Department, and the Procurement Logistics Administration Department.

We will establish regional headquarters in North America, Europe, China, and ASEAN, and build an NTN global procurement network, thereby promoting local procurement and procurement in optimal locations with global suppliers. In doing so, we will endeavor to ensure stable procurement and reduce costs.

Promotion of Monozukuri Paradigm Shift “PRODUCTION REFORM”

We are promoting digitalization with the aim of realizing “Monozukuri” that determines our competitiveness. The pillar of our policy is to eliminate waste by connecting information, and to prepare for a reduction in the working population through robotization, automation, and intelligence technology. Until now, we have pursued partial optimization (streamlining by process). In order to apply digital technology more effectively, we will introduce the overall optimization (streamlining of the entire supply chain) method to achieve more streamlined production.

We will promote streamlining with the goal of reducing production lead times and improving inventory turnover and productivity. We are aiming to create a Monozukuri system through digitalization and streamlining.

Promotion of a Global Procurement System

In the current world, a single day does not pass without us hearing the word “global” and we are making efforts to build a global procurement system, which is the pillar of Variable Cost Reformation and essential to our business. We believe that not only organizational development but also human resource development is essential for building the system, and we have worked with Mr. Brelaud, Operating Officer, transferred from NTN SMW in France, to review the procurement organization and to develop human resources that can play an active role in the international arena. To build our foundation, we will think from a global perspective about what is optimal procurement for the Company, and will continue to promote cost reductions, which are indispensable for generating income.

Establishment of a Global Procurement System

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Basic approach to Monozukuri

Basic approach to quality and promotion system

NTN’s Basic Quality Policy specifies all the basic principles that shape our manufacturing approach. We use it to work on maintaining and improving product quality throughout the world, working toward quality that satisfies all our customers.

Our products are used in many applications around us, providing daily support. They are also found in equipment where lives are at stake, such as aircraft, railway, automobile and medical equipment, and therefore, require extreme precision and durability.

Every single employee understands the importance of Quality and works earnestly toward Quality to earn our customer’s trust.

Basic Quality Policy

Pursuing right quality to meet functions and specifications requested by our customers.

• Applicable quality
• Our quality shall immediately respond to the change of our customer’s requirements.
• Our quality shall immediately respond to social change.
• We have to win quality competition.
• Quality is a company’s capital.
• Quality should benefit our company.

Quality slogan

Quality saves the way for our future

New Wakayama Works

In October 2019, we completed the construction of a new base in Wakayama Prefecture that produces radial bearings, our core products. The factory building has been constructed with a motif of “NAMERAKA” and a streamlined design of the roof. An arc-like passageway named “Conoco-Road” is established as the central corridor of the building and serves as the main artery of transportation of goods in the building. In addition, a forum, open meeting space and other areas for exchanging information, which are designed as communication areas to create innovation, have been set up on the second floor of the building.

As of June 2020, the installation of new heat treatment facilities and ancillary facilities has been completed, and installation of new grinding and assembly facilities has begun in order to commence mass production in October. Over the next five years, we will completely transfer the facilities from the Kongo Works and restructure the production of radial bearings centered on this new plant.

Specializing in high-performance, high-value-added products

With the rapid progress of EVs and electrification in the automotive market in recent years, the market for high-performance, high-value-added products such as quietness, low vibration and high-speed rotation is expected to expand with regard to radial bearings used in motors and driving parts. At the New Wakayama Works, which serves as the mother plant of high-performance products, we will adopt the latest heat treatment facilities, FA facilities, inspection instruments, and lift, as well as the latest technologies, including miniaturized and multisite facilities based on the manufacturing practices of the Kongo Works in order to offer a wide variety of products from small lots. Through these measures, we will work on new products that meet the needs of the market, halftime the prototype delivery time, and shorten the production lead time to one-third of the previous one, thereby promptly supplying high-quality products to the world. At the same time, the Wakayama Works is aggressively pursuing energy conservation and environmental impact reduction, aiming to become the mother plant of NTN Smart Factory.

“NAMERAKA Factory” that the New Wakayama Works aims for

The New Wakayama Works calls a smart factory a “NAMERAKA Factory” and aims to become a “NAMERAKA Factory” that delivers satisfaction to customers in a speedy manner. The Wakayama Works aims to become a plant with streamlined processes where goods and information flow smoothly.

“NAMERAKA Factory” that the New Wakayama Works aims for

To realize production that is highly flexible and responsive to customer needs and changes in demand
To enhance efficiency of manual work by using robots and lift
To reduce in-process inventories and shorten lead time through the “Automatic Transportation System” and “Production Control System”
To advance quality control by using IoT/AI