

Kyocera Group Management Roots

The roots of the Kyocera Group management reside in the Kyocera Philosophy, a philosophy of life based on the real-life experiences and empirical rules of Kazuo Inamori, founder and chairman emeritus of Kyocera Corporation. With “What is the right thing to do as a human being?” as its most essential criterion, the Kyocera Philosophy expounds the significance of commitment to fair management and operation in compliance with the most fundamental human ethical and moral values and social norms.

What is the Kyocera Philosophy (Corporate Philosophy)?

Kyocera Management Rationale

The Management Rationale of the Kyocera Group is: “To provide opportunities for the material and intellectual growth of all our employees, and through our joint efforts, contribute to the advancement of society and humankind.” The “material and intellectual growth” for which we aim includes the pursuit of economic stability. Furthermore, it entails the pursuit of mental riches as a human being, in the shape of life with purpose and job satisfaction through self-fulfillment in the place of work. Additionally, the steady refinement of technology allows us to provide the world with wonderful products one after another, and thereby contribute to the advancement of science and technology. At the same time, by steadily raising profits as a company we aim to contribute to improvement of common welfare, through increased tax payments and other means. The guidelines for action in pursuing the Management Rationale are set out in the Kyocera Philosophy. As a way of thinking for leading wonderful lives, we are striving day by day to practice the Kyocera Philosophy.

Origin of Kyocera Philosophy

In 1959, Kazuo Inamori, founder of the company, established Kyoto Ceramic Co., Ltd., together with seven other colleagues and with the generous support of people around them. Starting with a meager amount of capital, the company had no imposing office building or elaborate machinery in the beginning. All it had were fellow companions who shared the joys and sorrows and formed a close bond as members of one big family. Inamori then decided to base the management of the company on this bond of human minds. This is because he believed that while human minds are extremely changeable, they are also most dependable once the minds are bonded by strong trust.

Later, Inamori encountered many difficulties in managing Kyocera, but he overcame them each time believing in the strong bond of human minds. The Kyocera Philosophy was thus born as he debated his life and work.



Members at the foundation

Basic Ideas of the Kyocera Philosophy

The Kyocera Group believes that decisions should always be made through reason and with “What is the right thing to do as a human being?” as the basic criteria to achieve compliance with public morals.

The criterion of “What is the right thing to do as a human being?” is based on the fundamental ethical and moral values of the natural goodness of human beings: “Don’t be greedy,” “Do not cheat people,” “Do not lie,” and “Be honest” are teachings we all received from our parents as a child and represent the most basic principles of a human being.

We believe that when making decisions and taking action in daily life, we should resort to the criterion of “What is universally right as a human being” and not the criterion of “What best suits our own convenience.”

The Kyocera Philosophy Pocketbook

The Kyocera Group distributes a Kyocera Philosophy Pocketbook to every employee so that each and every employee can use, learn, and practice the Kyocera Philosophy on every possible occasion. The Kyocera Philosophy Pocketbook is the condensed essence of the Kyocera Philosophy with a brief explanation accompanying each item and comprises four categories (“The Heart of Management,” “To Lead a Wonderful Life,” “At Kyocera, Everyone is a Manager,” and “Performing Our Daily Work”) and 78 items.



Kyocera Philosophy Pocketbook

- I. What Kyocera Aims For
- II. Kyocera Philosophy
 1. The Heart of Management
 2. To Lead a Wonderful Life
 3. At Kyocera, Everyone is a Manager
 4. Performing Our Daily Work
- III. To Become an Excellent Leader

Management Based on the Bonds of Human Minds

Kyocera started as a small suburban workshop – with no money, credentials or history. Meager technology and 28 trusty comrades were all that we could rely on. Kyocera’s management is based on all employees exerting their full efforts and managers dedicating their lives to merit their trust; all believing in each other, none working for selfish motives. All united to make Kyocera a company that they can be proud to work for. Human minds are said to be easily changeable. Yet, there is nothing stronger than the human mind. Kyocera developed into what it is today because it is based on the bond of human minds.

Make decisions with an altruistic mind

Our mind seems to have two sides. One side appears to be concerned only with our own interests, while the other side is altruistic and will sacrifice to help others. When decisions are made with the selfish mind, nobody wants to help us, because these decisions have a self-centered, narrow perspective and are prone to mistakes. By contrast, when our altruistic mind makes a decision, everyone around us wants to help because the decision is benevolent, comprehensive and correct. In order to do good work, we need to make decisions based on the part of our heart that cares for others, not based on our own selfish interests.

Pursue profit fairly

A company must be profitable to survive. Being profitable is neither shameful nor unrighteous. A price that is determined through free-market competition is a fair price, and the profit earned is a just profit. Fierce competition promotes rationalization, while raising added value increase profit. Today’s world is rampant with management that disdains tedious efforts, seeking instead to make a quick fortune through speculative or illegal deals. Kyocera’s management, however, must persist in doing business fairly, pursuing a fair profit and contributing to society.

The Result of Your Life or Work = Attitude x Effort x Ability

The outcome of our life or work is the product of three factors: attitude, effort and ability. Effort and ability range from 0 to +100 points. As these two numbers are multiplied rather than simply added, it means that persons who exert unbeatable efforts to compensate for their only “average” ability can accomplish more than geniuses who rely just on their ability while making only a minimal efforts. This product is further multiplied by attitude, which can range from –100 to +100. Depending on our attitude, the outcome of our work and our life can change by 180 degrees. Thus, while ability and effort are important, it is our attitude that counts the most.

Follow Truths and Principles

Since Kyocera’s founding, all its corporate decisions have been based on basic truths and principles. Corporate management would neither succeed, nor be lasting, if it were unreasonable and morally unacceptable to society. We at Kyocera do not rely on so called “business common-sense.” We don’t make decisions by merely following the standard practices of “most other companies.” Whether decisions are on organization, finance or distribution of earnings, basing them on the essence of the matter avoids our making mistakes – even in a foreign culture or a new economic reality we have never experienced before.

Focus on “Work Floor” management

The basis of manufacturing is the “work floor.” The basis of sales is also the “shop” where we meet with our customers. When a problem occurs, we must at once return to the “work floor” facing the problem. No matter how we theorize or rationalize away from the “work floor,” we’ll never solve the problem anywhere but there. We often say that the “work floor” is a goldmine of clues, where pertinent information is found. Frequenting the site gives us clues not only to the solution, but also to improving productivity and quality, as well as gaining new orders. This is true of all operations, not just production or sales.

<Excerpts from Kyocera Philosophy Pocketbook>