

One of japan's most
successful
companies essay



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Black American actor Bill Cosby once said that " In order to succeed, your desire for success should be greater than your fear of failure. " True enough any company which obtained success has admittedly encountered failures along the way. To make it simpler, it could be viewed that success is the destination and the numerous " stops" in going there are the failures.

More often than not, our definitions of what represents success in organizations at the individual level (e. g. job performance) and the organizational level (e. g.

organizational effectiveness) have not changed over the decades. In connection, it has been perpetually mentioned that the Japanese-style management are interestingly mimicked by many companies around the world because of their unprecedented successes amidst every failure they have faced. As Fuse (1990, p. 24) aptly puts it: " Faced with the startling economic progress of Japan, the world was first stunned into amazement; the amazement was eventually turned into admiration and envy, and finally in the 1970s the admiration was transmuted into open fear and covert hostility." During this period, economists were understandably eager to explain the reasons for the Japanese ' economic miracle', and if possible to replicate it. Different theories were devised to explain Japan's economic success.

Some were purely economic, attempting to explain the success in terms of manufacturing systems or Japan's late development compared to the West; others tried to explain the success by use of cultural factors. Japan at the time stood out as the sole counter-example to Western economic theory,

which basically contended that non-Western nations would develop into Western-style capitalist economies as they matured. Japan's success was unprecedented for a non-Western nation, and this raised, for the first time, the possibility that successful non-Western styles of capitalism would be possible in the modern world. Was this due to clever economics? Or was it something deeper, within Japan's national identity and culture? (Graham 2003, p. 2).

Most of us are aware of the famous Japanese cars that are amassing great profits around the world. Remarkably, one of the famous Japanese car manufacturers is the Honda Motor Company. According to their website, Honda Motor Co. , Ltd.

is one of the leading manufacturers of automobiles and power products and the largest manufacturer of motorcycles in the world today. Honda has always sought to provide genuine satisfaction to people worldwide. The result is more than 120 manufacturing facilities in 30 countries worldwide, producing a wide range of products, including motorcycles, ATVs, generators, marine engines, lawn and garden equipment and automobiles that bring the company into contact with over 19 million customers annually. Honda Motors was established by Honda Soichiro who was born in 1906 and, during the war, manufactured piston rings in his small company to supply to Toyota and others. He sold this company to Toyota in 1945 and, in the following year, established Honda Gijutsu Kenkyusho (Honda Technical Research Institute), later to be renamed Honda Giken, which is now translated as Honda Motor.

The name of the company itself indicates Honda's emphasis on technology. Indeed, Honda spent most of his time on the shop-floor working on improving engines and developing new products that ranged from small engines to be attached to bicycles to 125 cc, 250 cc and 350 cc motorcycles that won the races in the Isle of Man. He scarcely attended managerial meetings, even board meetings, until his retirement in 1973, leaving all the financial, organizational, and marketing aspects of the business to his close ally, Fujisawa Takeo (Odagiri ; Goto, 1996, p. 200). .

Despite a few hitches, Honda Motors have managed to gain leadership in car sales around the world. In 2005 alone, US car sales record marked Honda Motor Co. and Hyundai Motor Co. as the leaders in increasing sales in the United States. That's why; Honda is beginning to import the Fit subcompact from Japan in April this year, aiming to sell 33, 000 this year in the United States and 50, 000 annually thereafter (Hyde, 6 January 2006). Not only that, the 2006 Honda Civic and Honda Ridgeline have earned the prestigious 2006 " North American Car of the Year" and " North American Truck of the Year" awards respectively, American Honda Motor Co.

, Inc., announced. This marks the first time ever that a single brand has won both awards in the same year, and it marks Honda's first win in either category (JCN Newswires, 9 January 2006). Browsing through their management policies, it could be deemed that their principle focus on maintaining a global viewpoint as they are dedicated in supplying products of the highest quality. In addition, they clearly state that We respect people and value their individual differences, and this has led to a free, vital corporate culture that encourages creativity. Today, Honda develops and
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produces its own original products and technologies for a diverse range of markets, from small power product engines to scooters and sports cars.

Honda has always sought to provide genuine satisfaction to people around the world. We are striving to deliver the products and services that customers in each locality want most. To ensure that we meet local needs, we go beyond establishing local sales networks; we have structured our operations so that many of our products are not only manufactured, but also developed in the regions where they will be used. The result is over 124 manufacturing facilities in 28 countries outside of Japan, producing the motorcycles, automobiles, and power products that bring us into contact with over 17 million customers each year (Honda Philosophy, Honda Website).

With the global perspective incorporated with their company philosophy, Honda Motors have etched success in not only by earmarking huge car sales profits, but also expanding worldwide. One may wonder how could Japan succeed in establishing its own car industry in the presence of the technologically advanced companies, Ford and General Motors? Odagiri & Goto (1996) cited two factors that appear to be most significant. One is the presence of entrepreneurs, who were willing to take risks and sustain efforts under adversity. The other is the capability of engineers to absorb foreign technology and the capability of workers to absorb new production processes. Needless to say, the Japanese culture and educational system contributed to this effect. Also, the emphasis on engineering education in universities helped not only in supplying educated engineers but also in providing technical assistance to the industry.

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Thus, it is safe to delineate that the success of Honda Motors Company was etched with the help of the discipline imbibed from the Japanese culture, the educational system that adhered to increased technological knowledge and somehow some sprinkle of luck as they virtually emerged to be one of the world's most admired car company. BibliographyCorporate Profile. Honda Motors Website. Acquired online last January 11, 2005 at <http://world.honda.com/profile>

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