

## **Toward a Business World That Fosters Managerial Talent**

**What is a society that facilitates women's active engagement?**

**A business world where employees work cheerfully regardless of their gender and people responsible for the next generation are nurtured.**

As it stands, many Japanese businesses are supported by male employees who work long hours. As a result of business streamlining, however, employees are seeing their work load increasing on a per capita basis, and management finds it more difficult to spare enough time to train their subordinates, who in turn find managerial positions less attractive. If this trend continues, it is less likely that managerial talent that can be responsible for the next generation is successfully nurtured. A society that facilitates women's active engagement is a society that breaks such an impasse and allows businesses in which both men and women work cheerfully to outperform others.

In fact, businesses where women play a more positive role perform better.

Nevertheless, it is difficult for women to work like traditional male employees because of their limited capacity to provide labor due to the time needed for housework, child-rearing, or care for elderly relatives. This may discourage some businesses to expand the scope of work for women or promote them to a managerial positions in some cases.

Some female employees may not be interested in shouldering such a heavy burden in light of their duties at home. Businesses cannot be blamed for preferring employees with less constraints on labor provision. Going forward, however, male as well as female employees with constraints on labor provision may increase in number amid increasing numbers of working couples and people who continue to work while receiving medical care, as well as a growing need for nursing care for elderly relatives at home. It is therefore necessary to build a corporate structure where even employees with limited labor supply can play a fulfilling role on the assumption that employees, whether they are male or female, have some limitations on work provision.

With this in mind, the study group offers the following suggestions for businesses toward a society that facilitates women's active engagement.

## Suggestions

1. Work both on gender equality measures designed to increase staffing efficiency and on work-life balance measures designed to discourage female employees from quitting as two halves of the same whole.  
(Don't assume that only gender equality suffices!)
2. Keep in mind that a long hiatus in a career or short working hours cause career loss; provide work-life balance support that accommodates actual needs.  
(Support designed to encourage employees to take child-care leave may hamper career development.)
3. Reform the practice of managers who spend too much time on operational work and little time on managerial work so that they can perform what is primarily required of them as managers in the face to time constraints.  
(The fettered position managers find themselves in degenerates the organization.)
4. Perform management so that prospective female employees will not be put off the fast track even when they cannot perform important duties due to their limited working hours and can maintain their desire to assume managerial posts.  
(A business where those not in the traditional mainstream can become managers is wonderful.)
5. Abandon the traditional model that assumes that men are the breadwinners; support male employees in participating in housework and childrearing on the assumption that working couples are the norm.  
(Homes in which men do not do housework or childrearing are unsustainable, and so are offices where such men work.)

It is important to perform career management from these perspectives so that men and women can work to their full potential.