

For the Future, Striving to Be the “Ideal Image”

The Sustainable Society Envisioned by the SWS Group



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As part of our CSR activities and efforts to build a sustainable society, SWS has identified three key themes: globally uniform high quality; trust, familiarity and accessibility; and living with local communities. These represent our “ideal image” of SWS. Since global companies are expected to make more contributions toward resolving social issues, what challenges must we face and overcome? Here, you have the opportunity to hear from three leaders who oversee CSR activities, each speaking from the perspectives of human resources, general affairs, and safety and the environment.

A Global Company that Contributes to Building a Sustainable Society

How can the SWS Group contribute to building a sustainable society through its business operations?

Kinoshita: Our group celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2017. We operate our businesses internationally and the scale of its business activities has reached the point at which it impacts the environment on the global scale. When we think about how we want to expand our businesses over the next 100 years, the subject of how we can contribute to building a sustainable society is very important. I believe that we must work closely with the communities of each region and concentrate on contributing to the development of that region while also to the success of the business of the whole Group. This should naturally lead to contributions to building a sustainable future.

Hashimoto: Our Group employs over 200,000 people. With this many employees and our support of their stable livelihoods worldwide are two ways we contribute to a sustainable society. In addition, the capabilities and ideas that our global network generates or the exchange of cultures

and values that it brings, I believe, are extremely important in tangible and intangible ways. It is our mission as a global company to leverage our network and identify opportunities from it which lead to new services or new products.

Morita: It may sound paradoxical, but employing over 200,000 people also means that our impact on the environment is that much bigger. Moreover, it implies that as SWS continues its business operations, we have a bigger responsibility to protect the global environment. I feel that we need to set clear targets to reduce the impact on the environment on a global scale and take big actions to prevent global warming. This is also important for the sustainability of our company.

Achieving CSR in Ways that Fit Business Operations

The SWS Group is trying to become its “ideal image” through initiatives driven by CSR priorities. What do you think are the current tasks at hand from your perspective?

Hashimoto: From the human resources perspective, we must continually work on maintaining and improving our work environment so that it becomes one that allows each employee to perform at their best and at the same time work together to achieve something on the whole. And in the ideal work environment, that achievement is recognized by all sections that lead to the winning cycle of employees feeling happy and valued, and then in turn they feel motivated to achieve more. I believe that such a company would naturally attract more talented people in the end.



Kinoshita: As we look to expand our businesses even further as a global organization, relationships with our stakeholders will become deeper and more important. We are a global company, but at the same time we are deeply rooted in Yokkaichi City, where our company was established. In the past, we have made contributions to this city in various forms, including initiatives to carry on the traditional culture of the region's "Yokkaichi Suwa Daiko Japanese Drums" toward passing this on to the next generation. In the future, however,

as we look forward to expanding our businesses and providing globally uniform high quality, we need one core theme on how we can contribute to society; in other words, contributions that are unique to SWS and those that are the same for society through our business. We can then launch them globally, as initiatives that we don't need to go out of our way to integrate them well into our business.

Morita: As we aim to build a truly global company, initiatives toward the "Global Environmental Conservation" will be more important. Our approach is to reduce CO₂ emissions from our distribution and manufacturing processes and also reduce waste. However, since we're expanding our businesses, it's inevitable that both of these will increase.



In this day and age, the simple excuse of "we are generating more because we are producing more" is not really acceptable. It's important to set guidelines that are appropriate to our business operations. One example of this is related to the topic of reducing



CO₂ emissions, or to monitor the energy consumption per unit of production. In addition, the global-scale water-resourcing problem, although not directly related to the production of wiring harnesses, is something that a global company like ours is expected to respond to. When it comes to environments, each region has its own issues and different attitudes toward them. For example, Europe especially tends to be stricter compared to Japan. We are in the process of defining our global policy regarding environmental issues, and we're looking to build infrastructures such that the policy can be applied in a way that makes sense to each region. We also envision drastic measures, such as teaming up with our suppliers and assessing each other's performance in terms of environmental impact.

Kinoshita: Living in Japan where water is plentiful, we often forget about this issue of water resourcing. However, since we have a global presence, it's possible that some of our global operations are based in regions where water resourcing is a big problem. It's important that we make an effort to see and feel like the locals do. Also, the resolution of the water-resourcing problem is listed as one of the SDGs, or Sustainable Development Goals, a call for action to combat universal challenges. I feel we have no excuse but to raise awareness of this topic within our organization.

Importance of Sharing Common Values as a Group

Hashimoto: The water resourcing issue is just an example. Given that our businesses have grown so big, I feel that all of us need to be more mindful toward global social issues. We're in a completely different business environment compared to 100 years ago. And we're exposed to rapid changes. So, in order to remain competitive in this new environment, we must above all strengthen capabilities within our organization.

Kinoshita: It will become more important for all our employees in the SWS Group to share the same values. The key is for us to share the same attitude and act as one in relation to global issues, and I feel that our company has reached that level of maturity.

Morita: When you have this many employees, you really feel the diversity of the organization; though, it's not easy to direct them all to act as

one. However, there are values that are common no matter where you are in the world, such as “safety first” and “sustainability.” I think the important thing is for us to show direction as a group and say: “This is how far we want to go with sustainability and safety.” If we can explain our vision in our own words and if people get it, then it’s just a matter of people implementing it in the ways that make sense in their own country or region. Additionally, I trust this would ensure that everyone shares a common sense of value.

Hashimoto: In 2017 the Group made a declaration on Diversity and Inclusion (D&I). We already have many foreign nationals working for us, and women and people with disabilities are becoming more and more active in the organization. In that sense, and in terms of diversity, I think we’re making very good progress. Our next step is to focus on the latter part: Inclusion. This will ensure that everyone in this diverse workforce is happy and feeling valued and that they are performing at their best. After all, the mission of “D&I” is only accomplished when that happens. Being diverse is now normal, so I think we’re expected to take this whole thing to the next level.

We aim to be a truly global company that international stakeholders can trust.

Do you have any final messages to offer regarding the SWS Group’s future?

Morita: In order for us to run various initiatives as a global company at a higher dimension, we must first develop our human resources. Moreover, we need to develop “SWS PEOPLE” with a capacity to act responsibly toward environments and safety, and also who can walk the talk in relation to everything listed in our CSR priorities. I believe that by doing that, we will be closer to our “ideal image.”



Hashimoto: In the past, the workplace was very mono-cultural and consisted only of Japanese male employees. How work was achieved was very different then, but in the modern workplace, it’s important to respect working styles and the values of individual employees while growing as a whole. When we think about the sustainability of our Group for the future, it’s important to develop the foundation for a workplace that allows employees from diverse backgrounds to excel, regardless of their nationality, sex, age or even limited working conditions.

Kinoshita: When we regard the Group’s next 100 years, we must really think about the development of our planet and the societies on it. Otherwise, we cannot truly call ourselves a global company. Nevertheless, we are a global company that employs over 200,000 people in approximately 30 countries worldwide. In each region, we strive to build our business infrastructure in such a way that we can contribute to local societies in a way that is most natural. Also, we must maintain our focus and be the company that stakeholders can trust for the next 100 years.

