

What We Can Do



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The R&D Center is the hub of research and development at NTT DOCOMO. As key part of the R&D Center, the R&D General Affairs Department plays a variety of roles other than research and development. One of those roles is distributing information about research and development achievements and new services of NTT DOCOMO to a multitude of people via our “WHARF” exhibition hall. Welcoming anyone and everyone to come in and take a look, WHARF provides a space where visitors “can actually feel our future vision for the mobile communications originated in NTT DOCOMO’s research and development.” Since WHARF was established, 120,000 people have “felt” that vision for themselves.

Our other vital roles include cooperating with local communities, ensuring safety and security of the R&D Center, and providing an employee-friendly workplace. Some of our efforts concerning recent hot topics are described below.

The R&D Center has two employee cafeterias. When employees take a healthy meal provided twice a month there, part of the sales proceeds from the meal is automatically given as a gift to provide one meal for school children in developing countries. This activity enables our employees to make social contributions—by simply eating a healthy meal—while their health awareness is improved. So I believe we should continue it indefinitely.

Moreover, to promote self-reliance and social participation of people with disabilities in the Yokosuka area, we provide a place for selling bread, cookies, and other foods that those people made by themselves (six times a year). Although the shop is open for about two hours (including setting up), the disabled participants do their utmost from the moment they set up the stall to when they total up their sales. This activity has continued for more than ten years and has become established as popular event at the R&D Center.

A section of the R&D Center has been registered as a location for shooting TV dramas, movies, and commercials, and several

scenes of TV dramas shot at that location have already been shown on TV. A number of businesses in the area are also providing filming locations to reinvigorate the Yokosuka Research Park (YRP).

Every year, around the time schools start their summer holiday, we hold an “Employee’s Family Tour” of the R&D Center. As an annual event, year on year, the tour is attended by a great many families of our employees—who otherwise wouldn’t get the chance to see where their parents or spouses work. The planning and operation of the tour is mainly undertaken by the employees working at the R&D Center, who dedicate themselves to devising an event that can be enjoyed by adults and children alike through activities such as laboratory tours, various events, “experience corners” for children, and a welcoming by our mascot “DOCOMODAKE” in life size. During the tour, employees’ children visited workplaces, exchanged name cards with their parents’ bosses, took photos with DOCUMODAKE, and so on while being escorted by mothers and fathers in a fun-packed day.

Some recent topics are described as follows. As part of celebrations for the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Yokosuka Ironworks (shipyard), Yokosuka City invited representatives of Miss International 2015 (from 75 countries and local regions) to Yokosuka. At that time, the representatives dropped by the R&D Center and experienced some of NTT DOCOMO’s latest technologies, including 5G (fifth-generation mobile networks) and services such as handwriting translation (called Tegaki Honyaku™*1). Although we were worried that the technologies presented might be difficult to understand and not so interesting to the representatives, this tour made good impressions on them (manifested in comments like “very impressive”) and generated many questions. Moreover, thanks to the representatives of many nations sending messages during the tour (by SNS, etc.), we could appeal to the whole world through NTT DOCOMO’s spirit of innovation. I think this event was also precious experiences for the employees who attended.

Introduced in the book entitled “The Cleaning Angels of the Bullet Trains,” cleaning staff for bullet trains are referred to as “cleaning angels,” and their work, which involves thankless tasks that are indispensable but go unnoticed, is referred to as “the seven minute miracle.” In the book, the cleaning staff make statements like “My worksite has lot more to do than what I was told to do,” “Things should get even better,” and “I ought to be able to do more varied things” [1].

Similarly, although the work of the R&D General Affairs Department is often mundane and goes unnoticed, we can still acquire knowledge and generate ideas and, more than ever, change our work to “Jobs that can only be done ourselves.” While holding on to that idea, I think we must continue supporting our colleagues working at the R&D Center while cherishing our relationships with our customers, local communities, and employees.

REFERENCE

- [1] I. Endou: “How Were the Cleaning Angels of the Bullet Train (the World’s Strongest Workplace Power) Born?,” Asa Publishing Company Limited, Oct. 2012 (in Japanese).

*1 Tegaki Honyaku™: A trademark of NTT DOCOMO.