

President's Commitment



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With Integrity in Business as a Starting Point, Fulfilling Our Missions to Society

Infinite Missions that We Must Accomplish

In June 2014, ITOCHU Corporation announced its Corporate Message, "I am One with Infinite Missions." The Corporate Message is an expression that comes to mind when pondering the corporate philosophy of "Committed to the Global Good" as well as a phrase that passes on to wider society the role of ITOCHU.

ITOCHU has a history of more than 150 years since its foundation in 1858. As Japan's economy transitioned from the post-war recovery phase through a period of rapid economic growth, an economic bubble, and a mature economy, the industrial structure underwent substantial changes. Over that period, ITOCHU and many other general trading companies overcame difficult times to record sustained corporate growth. The reason is that we focused on "selling products that the market wants." This consists of not simply handling a wide range of products and merely trading a commercial good from one place to another, but having individual employees quickly ascertain changing market needs on the front lines of various businesses around the world and continually offer added value. This is how we have maintained our presence.

This approach is not limited to the business front lines. Responding to demands from ever-changing society and providing the abundance that results from trade is required for sustainable growth. And this path is aligned with sampo yoshi (Good for the seller, Good for the buyer, and Good for society), the management philosophy of ITOCHU founder Chubei Itoh and the Ohmi merchants. It is the mission that we must accomplish. The Corporate Message: "I am One with Infinite Missions" expresses ITOCHU's strengths in easy-to-understand words, including the concept of sampo yoshi and the capabilities of individuals. Regarding the message as the starting point of ITOCHU's "integrity," I would like us to set about completing "countless missions." In part to demonstrate our consistent embodiment of this approach in international society, ITOCHU has participated in the United Nations Global Compact since 2009.

Avoiding Risks and Generating Opportunities

Looking at our business environment, the scope of our business activities has expanded and our business fields are becoming increasingly diverse, in accordance with the growth in the scale of our profits. Inevitably, the extent and scale of the impact of our business activities on society are also increasing, and the range of missions that we must fulfill for society continues to expand. For example, if we work to expand our value chain in emerging countries, we will face increased responsibilities in the areas of respect for human rights and environmental conservation. If we neglect those aspects of management, we will be judged harshly by global society, and our corporate value could be adversely impacted in one fell swoop. We must advance while always paying attention to the risks that we face as our business activities grow. If we can establish the practice of responding appropriately to these types of demands from society, then we can generate opportunities to ensure the continuity of our corporate value. In addition, we should be able to capture further diverse opportunities by leveraging the management resources that we have accumulated as a general trading company and sharpening our focus on establishing businesses that resolve the challenges faced by society. To avoid business risks and grasp opportunities that lie within social challenges, individual employees must sustain the values that are shared with society, and continue to carry out our front-line approach to enhance their sensitivity in determining what their missions are.

Securing the Human Resources Who Will Support the Future

In Japan, there are concerns that the working population will decline over the medium to long term due to the trends toward fewer children and an aging population. This is an extremely important issue for ITOCHU because our people are our greatest management asset. We are well aware of the necessity of hiring and developing the people who will support the future. I believe that we need to hire on the basis of talent, without regard to gender or nationality. ITOCHU's female executive officer, the first among general trading companies in Japan, was appointed to this position not because she is a woman but because of her superior abilities. In much the same way, the term "global human resources" does not necessarily refer to non-Japanese. We need to employ and develop human resources who can understand and respect the culture of each country, work effectively on the front lines around the world, and take the lead in business activities.

Being Neither Overconfident Nor Satisfied; Entering a New Growth Stage

We are able to thoroughly go on the offensive and generate strong earnings because we have been sure to inherit the spirit of sampo yoshi and positioned shared values with society as the foundation of our business activities. It is exactly at this time when we are moving to a new growth stage that we can clear a path for ITOCHU's sustained growth by each employee throughout the world possessing integrity in business, accomplishing our missions to society, and not being overconfident. We will steadily move forward step by step while keeping an eye on the next stage.