

Courageously forging ahead,
while keeping the greater picture
in mind.
Earning trust and returning value.
That is what matters to TDK.



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Eighty years have passed since the magnetic material ferrite was invented at the Tokyo Institute of Technology. And it is now 75 years since TDK succeeded in adapting it to industrial use. In the autumn of last year, “Development of Ferrite Materials and Their Applications” was designated as an IEEE Milestone*. This decision makes us happy and proud, as it recognizes the fact that even today, ferrite plays a vital role in the creation of new products and new technologies.

The spirit of inquiry, of creating something that has not existed before, is embodied in the TDK Group’s Corporate Motto. It inspires us to look for solutions to many of the problems facing the industry as well as society at large.

A case in point is the “Smart Grid” to which we currently devote considerable effort. This refers to a more sophisticated concept of distributing electrical energy, aimed at alleviating global warming. By taking advantage of advanced IT, the Smart Grid controls and optimizes power distribution while incorporating natural energy sources such as wind and solar power on a larger scale. In this scheme, converters and capacitors as well as many other products and technologies that are TDK’s strength have an important role to play.

In the field where optics and electronics interweave, we are engaged in research and product development related to “Light Peak” technology, a promising new approach that allows previously unheard-of high transmission speeds. The expected benefits of this technology range from weight reduction in electric vehicles to significant power savings for data centers.

As these examples show, the age we live in beset as it is with serious problems such as the worldwide economic crisis and environmental problems, also is an age when innovation can lead to significant advancements. Various kinds of limitations and obstacles must be overcome, which may in turn provide a stronger impetus to the spirit of craftsmanship.

In recent times, the manufacturing world in Japan all too often was focused only on short-term profit. But research and development that do not look far ahead is bound to produce only shallow solutions. In order to dig deep and create products and processes that change the face of the industry, a long attention span and old-fashioned patience are vital attributes.

TDK is basing its efforts on such an outlook which at times must encompass also the audacity to say no to the existing way of doing things. For example, must magnets which are indispensable for motors and similar products really be made of rare metals? What kind of source materials can be used to create what kind of device? We look at essential issues in a new light, and try to come up with solid and original solutions.

With regard to human resources, we are looking not only for people who can smoothly handle their assigned tasks but for people who bring individuality and new ideas to the table. We want to evaluate not only the result but also the process. With this aim, we are currently considering a revision in our personnel strategy. Even if an attempt at a new development ends in failure, the creative vision and the initiative to put something to the test are valuable assets that we want to cherish.

The current report presents some examples that illustrate how TDK rises to these challenges. I hope that you will find it interesting reading, and heartily welcome your comments and suggestions.

* IEEE Milestones: In 1983, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE, pronounced “I triple E”), a leading non-profit organization (academic society) headquartered in the U.S. with worldwide membership, established this list of key historical achievements in electrical and electronic engineering. The list recognizes events and developments that have had persistent and significant impact on the industry and on society for at least 25 years. There are over 80 milestones in total up to the present. With the recognition of ferrite, Japan is now represented with 10 milestones, including the Tokaido Shinkansen, the electronic calculator, and VHS home video recording.