

— Employee Roundtable Discussion —

# Offering a Firsthand Glimpse into the Unique Human Resource Activities of Kaga Electronics



We conducted an employee roundtable discussion aimed at showcasing the Company’s specific approach to human capital, providing an opportunity for a representative sampling of those on the front lines to share their observations. Although the Company operates as a strong organizational entity with a pervasive corporate philosophy, it acknowledges that it faces challenges when it comes to promoting the advancement of women in the workforce, improving work-life balance, and fostering a diverse workforce. With this in mind, we sought input from four of our female managers on their own career journeys, job comfort, and job satisfaction; from three of our male employees who have taken parental leave on their respective experiences; from each of them on their determination to achieve net sales of ¥1 trillion; and finally, from two members of the Personnel Department on their current challenges and future initiatives.

The Perspectives of Our Female Managers

What do you find rewarding about your current job and what inspired you to pursue your career?

**Fujita:** In my current position, which I assumed back in April of this year, I am responsible for sales in a division engaged in the manufacture and sale of equipment related to the telecommunications industry.

Rather than simply being a stage in my career, I believe that my promotion was the result of my sincere dedication to building good customer relationships and driving sales in a field that I love. Personally, I don’t consider myself to be well suited to sales, but I take pride in my resilience and, when I feel discouraged, I immediately refocus and ask myself, “What’s my next move?”

**Morita:** I also got my start in sales. My love of sales has led me to turn down several promotions simply because I never wanted to leave my job in the field. One reason I chose my current position, however, is that I felt that my opinions were less likely to be heard if I was not in a managerial position. Now that I’ve become a manager, I find that I enjoy nurturing my subordinates much more than



**Natsuki Fujita**  
Manager, Sales Department,  
Communication Network Sales Division

producing results on my own. My current duties include reviewing applications and other documents from the sales department for new business partners as well as managing the credit of our existing business partners. As internal operations have taken on a much greater importance than in the past, we want to ensure that our front-line sales employees are well supported.

**Ito:** I have been in the secretarial department since joining the Company and have supported Chairman Tsukamoto as his secretary since his days as president. When I first joined the Company, I had only a vague ambition to work here long term. Gradually, however, I began to think that if I was going to continue working here, I wanted to be in a position with some kind of responsibility.

Since becoming a manager, I have come to realize just how difficult managing people can be. For me, one area of particular difficulty is building rapport with colleagues whose values differ from mine.

How would you describe your experience balancing work and raising children?

**Fujita:** My work environment is the same as that of any other salesperson. As long as the numbers are reached, no one nitpicks about minute details, such as where you conduct your sales or how you spend your time. The ease with which I can structure my own schedule based on

a clear idea of what I need to accomplish to reach my goals makes it all the more rewarding.

However, balancing work and childcare has its challenges, such as requiring long hours of overtime and, at times, dinners with clients, which I have managed to work around. As such, I can’t deny that the balance has sometimes been a bit off.

**Morita:** All members of my current department are women, and many of them have children. As young children are prone to illness, sudden absences are common, so we have made efforts to create an environment in which employees can easily adjust their work schedules to accommodate such absences. Once this system began to function successfully, the office’s overall workflow



**Ai Morita**  
Manager, Business Administration  
Department, Administration Division

improved tremendously. Now, employees are able to take extended leave without feeling overwhelmed or apologetic.

**Ito:** I believe this system’s success is made possible through the cooperation of both our families and our fellow female colleagues on the same floor. I personally try to ensure that information is properly shared with others and that I do not shoulder the workload on my own. On the day of the Sumida River fireworks display, the Company opened its offices to the families of employees, allowing me to show my daughter the office where I work. She has seen me working remotely—for example, being flustered by receiving a sudden phone call

from the chairman—so this was a nice opportunity to show her what my job is really about.

What are your thoughts on efforts to achieve the goal of “net sales of ¥1 trillion”?

**Fujita:** Managing clients on my own was a great experience. Nevertheless, I have changed my approach as I want the younger generation to develop into salespeople who will, in turn, lead the next generation. Rather than remaining in charge indefinitely, I have decided to create an environment in which the younger generation can develop their skills and produce results, and to be actively engaged in their development. I believe that ¥1 trillion in net sales will be achieved through solid sales growth and the accumulation of such sales. This is the foundation on which we will continue to build.

**Morita:** As we are a trading company, I believe that everyone in our company, regardless of gender, has the spirit of conducting business in such a way that, despite our offering no products exclusive to our company, customers will choose the company and ourselves. We are committed to creating an environment in which customers are willing to purchase from us even if they have to pay a little more.

The increase in the number of bankruptcies nationwide in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic is cause for concern. Although consistently ensuring that bad debts do not occur



**Wakana Ito**  
Corporate Staff Office  
Manager, Secretarial Department

is a top priority, salespeople often tend to overlook the state of their clients' financial statements and other financial data in their desperation to make sales. This is an area in which we are determined to provide support, and this approach will, in turn, lead to the achievement of the ¥1 trillion goal.

**Ito:** In my role as his secretary, I intend to serve as a "lubricant" that will keep Chairman Tsukamoto's personal connections and relationships running smoothly while helping him maintain connections with the next generation of department heads and section managers. The Company will continue to aggressively pursue M&A opportunities as part of its growth strategy to achieve its goal of ¥1 trillion in net sales. And, no matter what kind of company we may partner with, even as we take in the other party's culture, we will draw on our history and Kaga-ism to strengthen our own culture and growth. I intend to serve as a bridge to achieve this goal.

Childcare Leave from the Perspective of Male Employees

How was your period of childcare leave?  
Have you noticed any changes?

**Kaneko:** It was very easy for me to apply for it, and I am grateful that I did. Having become somewhat accustomed to childcare, I took the leave in the hope that I would be able to make a substantive contribution to raising my child. Preparations from application to acquisition went smoothly. As



**Tomoyuki Kaneko**  
Sales Strategy Department  
Manager, Technical Marketing Division

many of my colleagues had also had children themselves, they advised me that it would be best if those needing to take care of their children put in time at home as soon as possible. I found their encouragement toward working remotely to be very considerate.

**Inoue:** When we had our first child, it was just my wife and me, as we both live quite far from our parents. The first three weeks were extremely difficult as neither of us really had any idea what we were doing. It's amazing that we got through it. It's wonderful that I was able to secure time off to take care of my children by taking advantage of the new system that allows employees to take special paid leave in increments as small as one day, as well as making use of the



**Yutaro Inoue**  
Corporate Strategy Department,  
Corporate Planning Division

remote work system, and by taking days off whenever possible.

**Nishikawa:** Being in sales and coming home at irregular hours, I was happy to be able to contribute to my family by taking proper parental leave. The number of my colleagues who have or are having children is increasing, and being able to head directly to our destinations and then home without going into the office makes things easier than ever.



**Souta Nishikawa**  
Specific Industry Sales Division

What are your thoughts on efforts to achieve the goal of "net sales of ¥1 trillion"?

**Kaneko:** As a Field Application Engineer (FAE) working with the marketing team to understand and analyze market and technological trends, I strive to establish new businesses and contribute to sales expansion. Furthermore, I also focus on digital marketing and am working toward the challenge of creating new business through content development.

**Inoue:** After spending two years in sales and 10 years in the Finance & Accounting Department, I transitioned to the Corporate Strategy Department this year. Even so, I would still say that my learning journey continues.

I am currently involved in the formulation of the next Medium-Term Management Plan, and I would like to ensure that the policies set forth by the Company are thoroughly disseminated throughout the Group as well as to devise effective systems and mechanisms to achieve these goals.

**Nishikawa:** Since joining the Company eight years ago, my position has been within the Sales Department. Watching my senior colleagues, I have come to realize that our breakthrough sales capabilities are unmatched by any of our competitors. On the other hand, I also recognize that all of us at the Company, myself included, are at a disadvantage when it comes to proposal-based sales in collaboration with other divisions, or selling products and services to satisfy an immediate need. First, I would like to

contribute to the achievement of our ¥1 trillion in net sales goal by becoming a salesperson trusted by all while steadily achieving personal goals that lie directly in my path.

The Perspectives of the Managers of the Personnel Department

What sort of human resource investment does the Kaga Electronics Group intend to focus on going forward?

**Suwa:** While the number of women in management positions at overseas subsidiaries is on the rise, quite frankly, this trend has not translated into similar growth domestically, either at Kaga Electronics itself or its Group companies. Our first priority is to increase the number of women in career-track positions, and from there we hope to train female employees for future managerial positions. The only female among the hiring group of 2022 in a career-track position was our very own Ms. Ishikawa. Up until then, the number of women in such positions had been limited to one every year or so. Although she had hoped for a sales position, Ms. Ishikawa was instead assigned to the Personnel Department, and through our joint recruiting efforts since then, we have successfully hired four new such employees in 2023, and five in 2024. However, even though we still have a long way to go toward the goal of placing 40% of female new graduate hires in general positions



**Keishiro Suwa**  
Manager, Personnel Department,  
Administration Headquarters

by 2028, as announced in the Medium- to Long-Term Sustainability Management Plan, efforts are being made to bring us closer to our goal.

**Ishikawa:** It is true that the Company's lack of female career-track positions is a concern for many prospective new hires. I believe it is my job to help alleviate that concern as much as possible. The most effective way to do so is to arrange meetings with senior employees. My hope is to demonstrate to new hires that through consistent and persistent dedication to their work, this is something they can achieve for themselves as well.

**Suwa:** Regarding the utilization of childcare leave by male employees, our first step was to establish a "special leave system" that allows them to take leave in one-day increments and to reclaim the paid leave they had previously used for childcare purposes. We hope that this will lead to an uptake in the utilization rate.

On the other hand, in terms of the working environment, the three years of the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact. The Company decided to expand remote working, which at the time had just been introduced on a trial basis, to the entire company at once, and a system of non-stop travel to and from destinations without the need to go into the office was made more effective with operational efficiency in mind. I believe that we have now entered a phase in which the Company will determine how to further increase productivity and utilize these systems while maintaining open lines of communication with its employees.

In terms of diversity, there are inevitably a number of systems that focus on childcare or maternity/paternity. Given that not everything in life is about getting married or having children, we seek to create an environment in which all employees can find support in the event of injury or illness or if they need to



**Natsumi Ishikawa**  
Administration Headquarters,  
Personnel Department

provide care for family members. Rather than neglecting to provide such individuals with information on support simply because they are not involved in child-rearing, I would like to see us create a company in which we support each other without establishing such false hierarchies.

**Ishikawa:** When interacting with prospective new hires, I receive questions regarding childcare leave both from women and men, suggesting that views and attitudes are changing dramatically. Going forward, I would like to be able to confidently present our Company's initiatives to such prospective new hires.

**Suwa:** As Ms. Nishikawa previously mentioned, Kaga boasts human resources with sales capabilities and the ability to break through barriers that are second to none in the industry. From now on, just as Mr. Kaneko mentioned, in order to nurture human resources capable of conducting sales with a forward-looking perspective, I would like to cultivate a strategic thinking approach among our younger employees who have gained some experience. And while preserving the good culture of Kaga-ism, I would like to further develop it and instill it throughout the Group.

**Ishikawa:** Because we are a trading company that does not own any products, above all else, it is ultimately the strength of our human resources that will support our future. Our goal is to continue to meet as many future aces as possible and to convey to them the appeal of the Company.