

# モータ工場の再建 1950年(昭和25)~1952年(昭和27)



1952年(昭和27)当社モータ部門発展の基礎となった「ハイパーモートル」  
"Hyper" introduced in 1952 accelerated the motor business development

終戦から5年が経った1950年(昭和25)、当社は本格的な経営再建に取りかかり、事業部制を復活させた。第3事業部にはモータや蓄電池といった赤字事業が集められ、その事業部長を高橋専務(当時)が兼務することになった。

高橋専務は再建の意を強くし、どうすればよいかを考えた。その結果、「なぜ赤字なのか。後発だからというのでは納得いかない。従業員の働き方が足りないとか、意欲や熱意がないという問題でもない。要は松下電器の経営基本方針を守って仕事をしていないために、みんなの働きが実らず赤字が出るのだ」という結論に達した。

そして、途絶えていた七精神の唱和を復活させ、経営基本方針に照らして、品質、コスト、サービスの徹底的な見直しを図り、その一つ一つに血のにじむような改善工夫の努力を重ねた結果、わずか半年で赤字を解消、再建は軌道に乗り始めた。

再建が軌道に乗って2年目の1952年6月、全国の販売代理店会議を開催したときのことである。各社とも激しい販売競争を繰り広げる中で、代理店側が値下げを厳しく要求してきた。昼の休憩時に幹部を集めた高橋専務は、経営基本方針のもとで値下げが可能かどうか、急ぎ、その場で品質、コスト、サービスについて検討した。出た「答え」は「NO!」だった。

午後からの会議で高橋専務は、値下げできない理由を3時間にわたって諄々と説明し、お願いした。「できれば直ちに値下げして、ご要望にお応えしたい。しかし慎重に検討した結果、品質もサービスもコストも他社の製品に負けない。これに最低利潤を加えたのが現在の価格であり、

これを値下げすることはできない。皆さんの要求は、明らかに過当な値下げだと思う。それでも値下げをせよと言われるのであれば、我われにはモータをつくる資格がないと思うので、明日から工場を閉鎖します」

さらに続けて、「ここで値下げをすれば、赤字に苦しんだ2年前の姿に逆戻りしてしまう。また、業界が大混乱するのは必至である。そうなっては松下電器の経営基本方針に反し、業界や社会に何ら貢献できなくなってしまう。皆さんのご支援によって閉鎖しかけた工場がここまで立ち直ったのです。どうか、もうしばらく目をつむって私どもについてください。その代わり、我われは来年5月発売予定の新製品を一刻も早く出すよう全力で努力します」と理解を求めた。

翌日から工場内の各部門が、昼夜をおかず新製品開発の取組みを急いだ結果、公約よりも半年早く、新製品「ハイパー」の発売にこぎつけることができた。しかも、これが大ヒットとなり、増産に次ぐ増産となったのである。



1953年(昭和28)当時のモータ工場  
Motor factory in 1953

経営とは妙なもので、もしあの代理店会議の席上でわれわれが妥協していたら、こういう力は湧いてこなかったと思う。経営の基本方針を守ることによって、本当の力が出てきたのである。瀬戸際に立たされても、われわれが強い態度を貫くことができたのは、この経営基本方針を守って仕事をしなければ、松下電器の経営は成り立たないという信念に基づいたからである。

Business management is not an exact science. If we had compromised at that distributor meeting, I believe we could not have achieved this degree of strength. We showed our real strength by staying true to our Basic Business Philosophy. The fact that we were able to win through in spite of holding such a firm attitude at this critical moment is down to our belief that Matsushita Electric cannot be run as a business unless we work to protect this philosophy

## Reconstruction of Motor Factory: 1950 - 1952

In 1950, five years after the end of war, our company started complete management reconstruction and revived the business division system. Such underperforming businesses as the motor and storage battery businesses were gathered in the Third Business Division, which was headed by Senior Managing Director Takahashi (then) who was concurrently holding the posts.

Takahashi concentrated on how to rebuild those businesses and reached the following conclusion: "Why are they in the red? Even the fact that we are latecomers in the market does not fully explain the losses. It's not that the employees aren't working hard enough or they are not fully committed or lack enthusiasm. I believe the reason is that because we are not engaged in business in a way that adheres to the Basic Business Philosophy of Matsushita Electric, so our efforts are not bearing fruit, resulting in losses."

At the company's ceremonies, he revived the traditional recitation of the Seven Principles, which had been discontinued, and thoroughly revised quality, cost, and service in light of the Basic Business Philosophy. As a

result of such diligence, all the losses were eliminated and the company's reconstruction efforts started to get back on track.

In June 1952, two years after the company had started to recover, a nation-wide conference was held of the presidents of all the sales companies and distributors in Japan. Against the backdrop of severe sales competition, each company strongly demanded price reductions. During lunch, Takahashi gathered the executives and discussed whether price reductions could possibly comply with the Basic Business Philosophy and quickly examined the quality, cost, and service. His conclusion at the time: "NO!"

In the afternoon session, Takahashi spent three hours explaining why Matsushita Electric could not reduce its prices. "If it were possible, we'd like to immediately meet your requests. However, after careful examination, we conclude that we cannot do so because our quality, service, and cost are as good as our competitors, and our current prices are merely the addition of minimum margins on top of necessary costs. We believe that your requests are excessive. If you continue to demand

that we cut our prices, we won't be able to continue to provide quality service to you, so we'll be forced to close our factory tomorrow!"

Furthermore, he asked for everyone's understanding. "If we cut our prices now, we'll slide back into our deficit situation of two years ago. Then our company's situation and all of the industries connected to us will fall into great confusion again, and we won't be able to contribute to the industry or society at all, which is contrary to the Basic Business Philosophy of Matsushita Electric. Our factories have made a large turnaround so far thanks to your support. Please bear with us a little longer. In return, we'll redouble our efforts to move up--as much as possible--the May launching date of our new products."

As each division in the factory struggled to develop new products day and night, our company was able to release a new product called "Hyper" six months ahead of schedule. It became a great hit, which resulted in repeated production increases.