"Full-Utilization" Skill

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The Great East Japan Earthquake occurred in March 2011 had significant impacts on the manufacturing plants of the parts suppliers that support automotive industry; especially Japanese automobile manufacturers were forced to dramatically reduce the first-half production. Since October when we had completed the recovery in production and were about to go into increased production, massive floods have been occurring in Thailand; the manufacturing and assembly plants of a wide range of parts have been temporary closed. As of writing this preface, manufacturers and users take various measures including the transfer of manufacturing operations and the switching to alternative parts, and the impacts are estimated to cover a wider range than the Great East Japan Earthquake.

As part of risk management, BCM (Business Continuity Management) has been called for a long time. Many of you may have reaffirmed its importance through this disaster. Although this was about ICT industry and 10 years ago, I remember the policy of Sun Microsystems (acquired by Oracle Corporation in 2010): "no use of cutting-edge technologies without a second source". The industry's leading company IBM took a strategy to maintain the superiority by exploring the unrivaled cutting-edge technology, and it was the time when there were many competitors who took the strategy as a model in the industry. I couldn't understand Sun's policy when I heard it first time; however, this was caused by the difference between IBM that had a semiconductor business and Sun Microsystems that didn't have it, and I think both of them were right considering where to emphasize their strength. How about FUJITSU TEN? We use mostly interchangeable general-purpose materials, but still we use some uniquely-developed custom LSI and dedicated parts without the second source. While the design becomes difficult, we should improve the skill of making full use of general-purpose materials, and the dedicated parts should be adopted only if they become a source of FUJITSU TEN's strength.

This applies not only to the hardware but also to the software. These days, the main part that realizes functions is shifted from the hardware to the software; therefore, the amount of software development is growing day by day. From this situation, particularly in the rapidly evolving fields, the self-designing is limited to only a small part that we can take advantage of our strength, and mostly it is the usual way to utilize something developed by other companies or other people. This is the necessary approach to deliver higher value to our customers at lower price, more quickly. I think some of you cannot have an interest in the utilization of something developed by other companies or other people because it is not challenging for developers; however, the integration ability that assesses the trend of advanced technologies in the world and makes full use of those technologies by taking a half-step ahead is important and worthy skill. Although ICT products and technologies as represented by smartphone and tablet device are starting to enter into the field of CI (Car Infotainment) products rapidly, instead of fighting against those, we should make an easy-to-use system including in-vehicle devices in parallel with taking the initiative in utilizing those. This is what is required of FUJITSU TEN and our company's value.

As I remarked like this, it is likely to cause misunderstanding that the element technology is unnecessary. The unrivaled cutting-edge technology is the value, that is to say, the source of profit, and it is quite obvious that the pursuit of it is the proper way. However, since the products will become more and more sophisticated, it is also true that the products never exist if our own cutting-edge technology is not combined with something developed by other companies or other people. Toward the product realization, in addition to the understanding of advanced trend by highly sensitive ability, the insight ability to see beyond, the capabilities for evaluation and verification of products including black box, we need to acquire the speed for competing globally. Although all of them are challenging and seem to have no standard textbooks, I would like to expect that we recognize they are the essentials for FUJITSU TEN to survive the competition, and work on them positively on a daily basis.