

We Must Never Stay in the Same Place, Even for a Moment



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I. The World Is Eagerly Awaiting You More Than Ever Before

0. Introduction

Ideas are determined by one's point of focus.

In business, where should you focus your attention?

How should you approach the point you're focusing on?

I am writing to convey the insights into how we try to spark ideas in a way that is unique to Kaneka.

The Kaneka brand is a sign of trust.

Relationships based solely on the buying and selling of products cannot be sustained.

"I want to be of help to you!"

We will convey this expression of our intention through our products and services.

This desire to be of help will lead to building bonds with those around us by moving people, material and products as part of our business activities.

Our goal is to become a trusted brand that is based on relationships of trust, where people say, "I can't do it without you!"

We want to build long-lasting, sustainable relationships based on trust.

Words are living things.

If we can convey Kaneka's way of life, including how we see, think, and move, that would be great.

1. Change

Who are we, and where are we headed?

"A company that makes wishes come true through science and technology"?

Kaneka is thinking 24 hours.

Of all the things I thought I should convey here today,

I decided on "The world is eagerly awaiting you more than ever before."



Management is about recognizing the changing times.

The keyword for the 21st century is probably “change.”

On a related note, the British magazine “The Economist” has listed “Donald Trump, technology and radical uncertainty,” and “Broader disorder” as its keywords for 2025. They have discerned the anxiety and instability of our times, and have unearthed the substance of the century of change.

What a fitting description.

We work to “change” every day.

Let’s raise the resolution and take a look at the workplace.

There are two types of people in the world.

There are those who can deal with a choke point immediately and those who cannot.

The latter cannot take action until all the details have been further investigated.

In other words, this is the type of person who can’t progress unless they clear each step one by one.

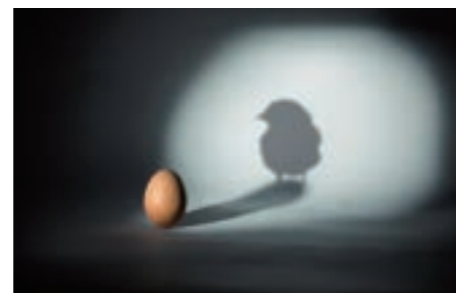
These people have no tolerance for uncertainty.

This may be a national trait common to many Japanese people.

What is important is to be a “Change Creator,” not a “Change Thinker”.

We are “Change Creators”.

We work to “change” every day.



2. Tradition Is a Series of Changes

Traditions become traditions through repeated change.

We live in an age of change and where individual values are respected.

Only companies that have both a long tradition and history as well as modern values of innovation will manage to survive.

How do you maintain balance between those things that will never change and those that change with the times?

At Kaneka, we are thinking 24 hours about how we can change.

You can find different methods by looking at things from the opposite side.

For example, how about thinking like this?

Even in situations you have no experience of or situations you didn’t expect, don’t stop thinking.

Change your perspective. Constantly ask yourself, “Is there another way?”

Look at it from the opposite perspective. Question all preconceived notions.

Choose an approach that differs from social norms.

Think of failure as a path to success. Take on challenges with a burning sense of curiosity.

I think that “things that other people don’t do” are wonderful.

Here’s how such people behave.

Let’s play it by ear!

Act like you’re in a jam session and don’t look at the sheet music.

Emphasize flexibility and improvisation.

Go with the flow!

Act flexibly while keeping an eye on the situation.

Tolerate ambiguity!

Be positive, even if things are unclear.

Everything starts with curiosity and courage.

Curiosity and courage are like muscles. They can be trained.

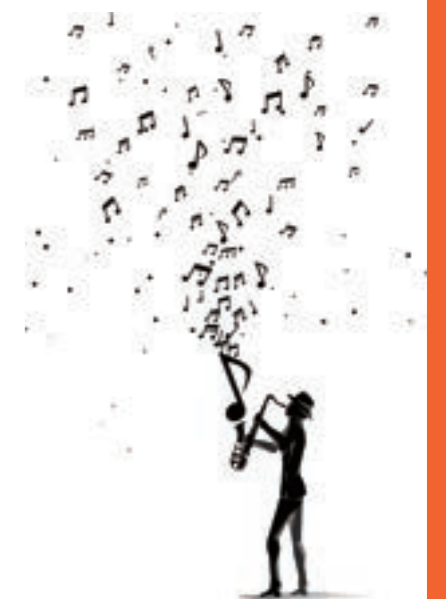
However, if you don’t continue to use them, you won’t be able to maintain them.

You can’t become a curious person unless you make it a habit.

Without courage, it is impossible to step into the unknown future.

Brave for change!

We strive to create a workplace with a culture like this.



3. Kaneka Way / Kaneka Spirit

The ability to continue learning.

A requirement for being a Change Creator is to possess a “strong desire to continue learning.”

While firmly committed to a big goal, vision, or change, we will change direction as needed to achieve it.

The ability to move in such a resilient way.

True success and change are often accompanied by setbacks, course corrections, and periods of stagnation.

By clarifying the “why” and being flexible about the “how,” we can pivot with confidence.

Here is a famous quote from Mahatma Gandhi.

“Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever.”

Dynamic change between before and after

As a Change Creator, Kaneka is currently working on several Moonshot Projects that will dynamically change the “before” and “after” in the field of life sciences (*1).

Never give up! Never stop!

We call this the “Kaneka Way” or the “Kaneka Spirit.”

*1 See “This is the new frontier created by chemistry” on page 16.



4. Human-Driven Management to Create One’s Own Story

“I Wake Up Every Morning to Dream” (*2)

In the previous integrated report, we cited an excerpt from an interview with Haruki Murakami in the opening caption.

I decided to choose it because I was inspired by his ideas, which are full of paradoxes and metaphors that make his writing so appealing.

There are no limits to life unless you create them.

So...

For this report, I have decided to include a poem by Shuntaro Tanikawa called “*Hitori, Hitori*” (One by One) with some special thoughts of my own.

Like the previous integrated report, this one is also rooted in praising humanity, with the theme “work and life are about creating your own story.”

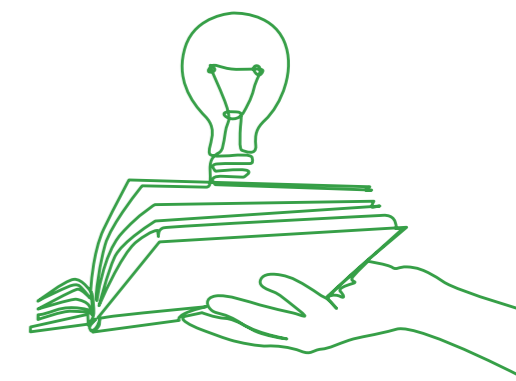
There are no limits to life unless you create them.

This so-called “human-driven management” is the substance (theme) of the integrated report in 2024.

The irony contained in Mr. Tanikawa’s poem, “*Hitori, Hitori*” is actually an ode to humanity.

In a world where we are forced to be alone and the meaning of being with others is deeply complicated, I wish to look at the whole picture with a wide-angle lens (like Mr. Tanikawa) and express “human-driven management.”

*2 Haruki Murakami, “I Wake Up Every Morning to Dream: Haruki Murakami Interview Collection 1997-2011,” Bungeishunju (Bunshu Bunko), 2012



5. Poem "Hitori, Hitori"

Last year, Shuntaro Tanikawa passed away.

He will be missed.

Each person
has different eyes, nose and mouth.

Each person
looks up at the same blue sky.

Each person
has a different face and name.

Each person
sighs in a similar way.

Each person
lives a different little story.

Each person
is swallowed up by a big story.



This is an excerpt from the picture book "Hitori, Hitori" (*3).
(Poem by Shuntaro Tanikawa; Illustrations by Chihiro Iwasaki)

Mr. Tanikawa was a philosopher who conveyed profound things in simple words

Shuntaro Tanikawa's poetry, which is so evocative of our age of loneliness and anxiety, is synchronized with the gentle illustrations of Chihiro Iwasaki, and it gives us a sense of quiet courage.

He acts as a guide to a wonderland where he delivers the sparks of surprise and emotion to us, letting his words soar freely like a bird.

*3 Shuntaro Tanikawa (Poem) and Chihiro Iwasaki (Illustrations), "Hitori, Hitori," (Kodansha), 2020

His words will surprise you, impress you, make you giggle,
and even move you to tears.

Mr. Tanikawa was a philosopher who conveyed profound things in simple words.

6. I Want to Drill a Hole.

Making a living out of things you can't see.

I was wondering why I chose Shuntaro Tanikawa,
and then I realized that he works with things you can't see.

If I am too focused on "what I can see" in management,
I will create my own internal limitations.

I want to make a living out of the things I can't see,
and progress in my own unique direction,
with sensibilities like Mr. Tanikawa.

And I want to place importance on appreciating the "overall landscape."

What lies beyond the horizon.

Make your next move smoothly and flexibly, in any direction.

This is how I want to move forward and help Kaneka grow.

Chasing after what lies beyond the horizon.

Do things immediately,
do things without fail,
do things until I can do them,
and take action when others don't.
Because management is about getting things done.

What I want is not a drill, but to drill a hole.

7. The World Is Eagerly Awaiting You More Than Ever Before

Discover the future!

Dynamically transform Kaneka's portfolio.

"Change" is what Kaneka is striving for.

We are managing our portfolio with an emphasis on the following three points.

- Purpose (soulful commitment)
- Practice (serious engagement)
- Publish (outward communication)

Here's how the story goes.

Above all, the "areas where no one else dares to tread" are the hidden gems that will create Kaneka's future.

First, we must explore new possibilities in a way that is unique to Kaneka.

We must take the first step as if we were casting a fishing rod.

Only by thinking while acting will you be able to truly see the world.

By planting seedlings and watering them, we are building the architecture of the future.

It's not a question of, "What will the future be like?" but rather,

"What will we do with the future?"

If I wasn't hard, I wouldn't be alive.

If I couldn't ever be gentle, I wouldn't deserve to be alive.

As I was quietly reciting Mr. Tanikawa's poetry, I suddenly thought of the words muttered by Philip Marlowe, a detective who appears in Raymond Chandler's novels.

You don't do something because it's easy.

You do it because it's difficult.

8. Imagination Is the Power to Dream

Creativity Is the Power to Make Dreams a Reality

We must never stay in the same place, even for a moment.

One thing I am always asked to do is to create new business models that will differentiate us from others.

From small routine tasks to management and marketing issues, we can't afford to stay in the same place, even for a moment.

However, it is important to be aware of the pitfalls of information.

No matter how much information you gather from the Internet, such as from social media or Google, if that information is available to everyone, there is no way to differentiate yourself.

Strengthen your ability to dream.

Stop trying to be a perfectionist.

As such, perhaps the most important thing to be conscious of is the "ability to imagine things that cannot be seen".

To do this, you need to exercise your "ability to dream" in the same way as you would work out your muscles.

Here are the best practices.

Rather than paying attention after the sprouts appear, it is important to find the seeds before they sprout.

By the time you notice the sprouts, many people would have already known about them. Even if you focus on the flowers as they bloom, there will already be many people gathered there. This is an example of the red ocean strategy.

We must act based on our predictions of what kind of flowers will bloom from the seeds. That way, we can get ahead of everyone else.



The most capable researchers are experimenting the most through trial and error. They are desperate to find various possibilities and new relations. They try many ideas and obtain the very best. Because they overcome their struggles, they are able to experience the pleasure of making their own discoveries. The point is not to find the right answer, but to “discover something through your own experiences and struggles.” Stop trying to be a perfectionist.

I wonder what this is, it's interesting, it's strange.

Everything that stimulates the five senses is information.

Ideas can be found all around us.

For example, when walking around town, there might be times when you see something and ask yourself, “I wonder what that is?”

You might have a conversation with someone and think, “That’s interesting.”

This kind of analog awakening that you pick up intuitively is an antenna that allows you to discover new things before anyone else.

The important thing is to be sensitive to the encounters you have in your everyday life.

That’s strange. I wonder why. I can feel it.

Chasing your dreams.

However, this can be a challenge.

In a sense, it is a matter of constantly keeping a close eye on the changes of the times and continuing to follow them.

This is because we are constantly updating our understanding of the changing times.

I wake up every morning so that I can dream while shaving my beard.

The ordinary discoveries of the world’s mysteries can be the remarkable gateway to serendipity.

Creativity is the power to make dreams a reality

Let’s start from the beginning.

Those who are referred to as “artists” are people whose job it is to conceive of what things should be like and to view the current situation critically.

And artists value inspiration.

In other words, art is stimulated by “something beyond the five senses” and grasps its true form through backcasting, then analytically dissects the present.

This is essentially the ability to set out challenges in business.

Art has become an indispensable way of thinking about business planning and future creation.

The power of creativity in art is the ability to make dreams a reality.

That’s why the entire world is taking notice.

A desire to discover things through your own senses and creativity.

By the way, I would like to say something despite the risk of being misunderstood.

There is no right answer in creation.

The same is true for business.

It is said that humans live their lives with 20% rationality and with 80% irrationality.

It is emotion, not logic, that moves people.

Art is always flexible and open to change.

I am proud that Kaneka is a place where people who ask questions like artists (rather than those who provide answers) come together.



9. Show Your True Colors

Kaneka Is a Human Driven Company

I repeat, the ultimate goal of our work is to differentiate ourselves.

It's about creating a difference from others.

You should always be asking yourself how you can show your true colors and express your individuality.

It has no shape.

It comes from having a deep, passionate inner feeling that makes others feel, "You may say strict things, but you are always warm and empathetic. You truly care about me."

Your individuality becomes your unique color and style.

It's all about people.

We drive growth by enhancing corporate value through personal growth.

The captain of the ship unites the feelings of the crew to create a winning momentum.

10. Diversity and Human-Driven Management

Unique ideas are determined by how differently you can see things compared to other people.

You can make new discoveries depending on where you are looking, the angle you are looking from, and your point of view.

People who make it a habit to see things from a wide, deep and distant perspective are those whose point of view is constantly shifting.

The same goes for an organization.



We want to create new value through the hands of our diverse employees, who are not bound by attributes such as gender, age, nationality, or educational background.

Unique work schemes are created from groups with diverse personalities.

Diversity of ideas.

I want to amaze the world with their creativity.

I work with this in mind.

My job is to be a stage director that brings out their improvised performances.

We are actively promoting the hiring and promotion of women.

The aim of diversity of ideas is to expand opportunities for women to play an active role.

"Gender equality? Why should us women, who are superior, have to lower ourselves to men and be equal with them?"

Perhaps these words from Yoko Ono epitomize this era.

The achievements of women are truly remarkable.

11. Life Focus Management & Chemistry of Life

Before we are no longer able to live on the Earth

Life on Earth, our lives, and all life phenomena can be described in a common language called chemical reactions.

This is why Kaneka's management policy is to research the "mysteries of life" and support a society that nurtures life.

"Life focus management" is the purpose that is at the root of Kaneka, the "Dreamology Company —Make your dreams come true."

This is because our understanding of the universal truth that "life is a chemical reaction" is at the root of it all.

This is why animals, plants, and the Earth are the main characters in this integrated report.

Chemistry of life

Life and the Earth are connected as one.

If the “critical point” is exceeded, the situation could lead to dangerous climate change and mass extinctions.

In order for humans to survive as a “species,” we require a “chemistry of life” that changes our thinking patterns, zooms out, and reexamines the entire “Earth and all life on it” from the perspective of life on Earth.

The various research conducted by Kaneka may appear different, but they are all connected to the big “life,” that is, life on Earth.

The new frontier created by chemistry

We are shifting our management resources to life sciences.

We want to make the big “life” of “life on Earth” healthier through chemistry!

Kaneka’s “biomanufacturing,” such as the biodegradable polymer Green Planet™, genome editing technology, biopharmaceuticals, regenerative and cell medicine, organic dairy products business, supplements, and fermentation culture process technology, PV technology, and medical devices are all connected to the big “life,” that is, life on Earth.



12. Trust People & Mutual Respect

“Trusting colleagues and respecting differences” has been a Kaneka tradition spanning 70 years.

We will revitalize a culture in which customers and colleagues work together as one team with a sense of trust and respect.

I can’t do it, it’s impossible for me.

Say goodbye to such negativity.

Let’s go on a limitless adventure using positive thinking.

13. Glocal: Connecting Global and Local

The world is our main field of action.

The domain in which our diverse employees play an active role is the global stage.

Adventures on a global scale can be like stepping into someone else’s shoes.

There are countless different shapes and sizes of shoes in the world.

By stepping into those shoes, it will allow you to see the world through someone else’s eyes.

Only when you walk in those shoes will your business start to make progress.

We refer to this as “glocal”.



14. Carbon Neutral/DX Initiatives

We made the decision to stop using coal boilers.

We aim to reduce GHG emissions by 30% by 2030, and achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

We will continue to work on reducing energy consumption through fuel conversion and process innovation for our own power generation facilities.

We are also working on a company-wide digital platform concept using the latest digital technology to promote operational innovation in research and development, sales, SCM, and back-office operations. Through these efforts, we will create new values such as “creation of new businesses” and “transformation of work culture.”

Gratitude and Prayers

The god of management is in the details.
Each and every thing that happens in the field,
each and every change in each and every person in the field is management itself.
Management is about shining a light on the details
and moving the whole thing forward.
I believe that it means to go back and forth between the entirety and the parts,
and to adapt to change.

Nothing would make me happier than for you to read this report and understand the relationship between the entirety and the parts of management.

Over the past year,
we have also been engaged in “Human-Driven Management.”
I am reporting this with gratitude and prayers for all of you.



II. Plan: "Initiative 25"

This is what is known as a mid-term plan.

We at Kaneka have started planning by backcasting from the future to ask ourselves what we should be doing now.

The duration of the plan is three years (2025-2027), but we will cut into the "now" of the plan and narrow down the issues.

We have summarized the ideas we came up with for "Initiative 25" and the messages we sent internally.

Discover Future

- Go 100 years -

Opening Statement

Before We Are No Longer Able to Live on the Earth

Ambitions to Be Cherished

- Life Focus Management : Chemistry of Life
- Wellness First : Ode to Humanity Health Management
- Human Driven Company : Diversity

Who Are We and Where Are We Going?

The World Is Waiting for You More Than Ever Before

i. "Life Is Either a Daring Adventure or Nothing at All." (Helen Keller)

1. Leap toward tomorrow. Go big.

There is a goal that you can see.

But do you have future dreams?

Helen Keller's words directly strike each and every one of our challenges that we must face in "Initiative 25"

If you choose "to do nothing",

you are undoubtedly on your way to a "sickness unto death"

Let's take our thinking to another level.

Discover Future

Leap Toward Tomorrow

Stay Positive, Stay Hungry

Change Is the Only Option

Change & Create New

Discard Courageously, Choose a New Era

2. Change. Let's pivot to change. Die or Change

Planning is about deciding "how you live."

Look at those who are always fixated on adjusting to change.

They are caught in a whirlpool of change, unable to see where they are.

The 21st century is truly an era of "Die or Change"



Let's have faith in who we are tomorrow.
It's time to decide how you want to live.
The future is your story that you create.
Let's call the future our plan.
Stand firm on your pivot foot and let's pivot to change.
Ambitions.
Ambitions create change.

3. Backcast the epic vision

In order to survive in a time of uncertainty, "Initiative 25" will backcast to determine how we should live.



- (1) Draw a big picture. Renew our vision.
- (2) Decide on a goal based on the new vision.
- (3) Structure issues by backcasting from the goal.
- (4) Edit the structured issues and the gap between the goal into bold mechanism, fill in the gap. This is the plan.
- (5) Complete the action plans without fear of failure.

The "initiative" is the actions that fill in the gaps.

*Why don't you try drawing using a sketch?

Is there a vision?

Is there a goal?

An initiative without a vision or a goal is a fake initiative.

A passionate vision for the future.

Let's take a closer look at "your narrative," a story filled with epic vision.

4. Plan for coincidences. Make your own guess

A plan is about finding the fabulous "what ifs."

It's about planning coincidences.

Coincidences can be planned.

The process is called "serendipity".

Let's "make your own guess" like a fisher or a hunter.

Good planning is a way of "hunting" for favorable outcomes from favorable coincidences.

To tomorrow, to tomorrow.

We encounter coincidences by being immersed in it.

Your passionate dreams and ambitions will turn today's bad luck into tomorrow's serendipity.

It's you who moves mountains.

5. Who are you? You are an idea craftsperson making guesses

How do you know if it is a good fishing spot?

When fishing, fishers gradually identify the area where fish are likely to be found based on their experience, such as "there seems to be fish around here,"

"in the morning there usually aren't many fish in this area,"

or "if this spot doesn't work, it's better to move over there."

This approach is based on hypothetical thinking, using hypotheses based on one's own experiences and investigations.

A hypothesis is used to identify focus points from among many possible points.



“Initiative 25” is a process of narrowing down the issues and predict good fishing spot by zooming in and out highly, broadly and deeply.

Planners are the fishers and hunters who come up with the ideas.

They’re idea craftsperson making guesses.

6. Where will “Initiative 25” lead us?

“Initiative 25” is a process of creation.

It is a “limitless treasure box” filled with curiosity and dreams.

It is a base for birds to fly freely.

There is an abundance of good things out there.

Backcast and change the present from tomorrow’s goal.

Never give up, never give up, never stop!

Fortune comes wearing the mask of hardship.

7. Let’s stick to our promise

A plan is a promise.

We must set out to fulfill what we promised.

Let’s stick to our promise.

Let’s execute our promise.

Let’s realize our promise.



ii . Are You Answering the Right Questions?

1. Choose the real issues

Those who are good at setting up focus points solve problems with overwhelming speed.

Their results are so outstanding. Why is that?

That’s because they are selecting the right questions to answer.

The right questions here are the focus points.

Those who select the wrong focus points at the beginning will tackle the wrong questions.

Naturally, the boat drifts.

2. Work has deadlines

No matter how much effort you put in to find the answer, you’ll never find the answer if you are solving the wrong question.

You’ll never get to the island you’re aiming for.

You have to set up the focus point again. And start all over again.

What is the point?

It is that work has deadlines.

Which means that setting the focus point at the beginning is an extremely important key to getting the answer within the deadline.

All the “this and that” are not a plan.

Find a way out of all the “this and that.”

Let’s identify the real issue hidden behind all the “this and that.”

It’s about zeroing in on the underlying issues.

If you set up the focus point correctly, you can discard a lot of irrelevant distractions that you don't have to think about.

This is the benefit of issue-centered thinking.

3. Enter through the correct entrance

Solving the real issue.

That's the biggest focus point in "Initiative 25"

Are you answering the right questions?

Choose the correct story over the correct-looking answer.

The story you chose, is this the real issue?

Let's humbly ask ourselves "Why?" five times.

Then you'll see the root cause.

iii. Transforming "Craftpersonship" into a "Mechanism"

1. Connecting the dots to conceptualize and structure the entirety

Kaneka is a forest that continues to change and grow.

Winning in technology, winning in business.

That is what making a "Craftpersonship" into a "mechanism" is about.

Create a blueprint for the entire business with big concepts.

Connect the dots of individual tasks and tie them together by big pictures.

One entirety, one system.

Let's factor strategy into tactics.

The integrated total system is the "mechanism".



I don't want a drill, I want to drill a hole.

Exciting: Does the image of the future make your heart dance?

Unique : Is Kaneka's character tightly woven in?

Can do : Do you and those around you want to do it and believe it is possible after hearing about it?

2. Let's make "Shu-Ha-Ri" a part of our daily lives

"Shu-Ha-Ri" has been the basic form of the Kaneka Way, the Kaneka Spirit.

Shu: Learn the basics (kata) of traditional Craftpersonship

Ha : Apply the kata

Ri : Add originality and ingenuity to the kata and pursue your own unique style

Learn the forms in "Shu", break them in "Ha", and transcend to new heights in "Ri"

Let's reconfirm. Practicing "Shu-Ha-Ri" is the essence of "Initiative 25"

1. Are you not only learning the "kata" in your workplace but also making it a routine to take on new challenges beyond the boundaries of the "kata"? It is the encouragement of breaking the kata (out of box). Innovation ignites.
2. Next, are you putting the innovations created in the workplace into a new "kata"? Are you scaling it up?
3. And are you replacing old "kata" and wisdom with new ones?

Define "Shu-Ha-Ri" as an ambition.

Let's promote rebirth from old to new.

Let's expand "Craftpersonship" to "mechanisms".



iv. Place Culture Front and Center in Management

Kaneka Way, Kaneka Spirit

Imagination is the power to dream.

Creativity is the power to give shape to dreams.

We are “Change Creators,”
not “Change Thinkers.”

Always do what others are not doing and challenge something new.

That is the Kaneka Way and Kaneka Spirit.

We will pass this power on to the next generation and the generation after that.

Also, foster a culture in which management and employees share an awareness of the status quo and a common vision.

All employees must become one team,
communicate, and get outside of the box.

We will evolve the Kaneka Way and Kaneka Spirit in this way.



v. Discovery Driven Planning

1. Let's think while running

Technological innovation is remarkable.

New innovations are appearing one after another all the time.

What we were so sure to be stable undergoes radical change.

The given business premise is being broken down in a blink of an eye.

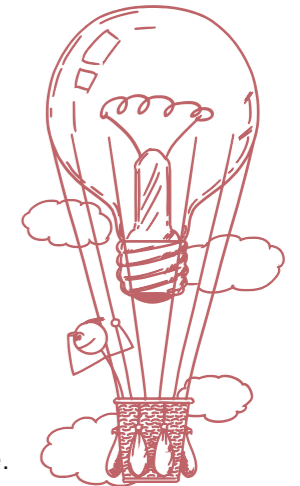
We can't make a plan with the conventional idea that we know what the future holds.

But that doesn't mean we should just take off running with anything and everything.

Let's rethink the plan as we run through the process of trial and error.

Leap before you think.

This is discovery driven planning



2. Write a script that is extreme and flexible

When it's time for a change of strategy, it is better to start the story with an “extreme”

Plan A is an alternative scenario where 100% of the targeted goals were achieved.

Plans B and C are realistic scenarios with considerations of risks.

“Initiative 25” is Plan B or C.

For Plan A, let's leap extremely.

Like the pendulum on a clock, if you swing the pendulum to the extreme, you can broaden the scope of your plan and see the realistic scenario.

Innovation comes from “the edge of chaos”

Chaos is caused by a combination of unpredictable things.

Chaos created in an indecipherable paradigm shift is an opportunity.

Let's refine our sensibility and create a plan that is not an extension of the conventional one.

Only companies that can shift strategies from the scene of chaos will survive.

vi. Show Your True Colors. The One Who Persistently Thinks Wins!

A few closing remarks.

First, ask yourself this question.

Believe in your true colors and make work more interesting.



Let's believe.

Always try to express yourself.

There may be many ups and downs.

They may be small things.

By doing so, you can naturally create the life you want and the work that excites you.

Begin small, create big!

Creativity never runs dry. The more you use it, the more it overflows.

Repeat again.

"Initiative 25" is a process to accomplish the promises we've made.

Those who don't give up and are persistent will win.

