

Chapter 3

We value people

The Cosmo Oil Group recognizes that its employees are the driving force behind its business. Each and every employee is responsible for communicating with customers and delivering the environmentally friendly products and services that society expects. As a corporate group that values people, the Cosmo Oil Group strives to create a positive and dynamic work environment. The Group aims not only to provide fair and impartial evaluations that reflect individual employees' aptitude and abilities, but also to accommodate new working styles that help employees to achieve work-life balance.



Participating in Earthquake Reconstruction through the Volunteer Leave Program

Hayato Ishibashi
No.2 Refining Section, Sakaide Refinery, Cosmo Oil Co., Ltd.



“Using the volunteer leave program, I helped out with earthquake reconstruction work in Ishinomaki City, Miyagi Prefecture, from September 1 to 16, 2011. The number of eligible days for the volunteer leave program was increased after the Great East Japan Earthquake, and so I was able to take half a month of leave using the new program and paid absence.

The reason I participated in volunteer earthquake reconstruction work was that I wanted to see the situation in the disaster region with my own eyes, rather than just thinking about it, and I thought I would learn a lot through new experiences.

Surprisingly, my biggest shock came when I became the recipient of concern from a local person I met there. He said to me, ‘Tohoku has been devastated, but what are you doing to prepare for earthquakes in other regions?’ I was embarrassed to realize that while being so eager to serve as a volunteer, I had neglected to make my own personal disaster readiness preparations.

That’s why this experience became an opportunity to renew my awareness of dangers on the job. I would also like to use my recent volunteer experience to increase disaster prevention awareness throughout the entire Sakaide Refinery.”



Tsukasa Shitsukawa
Manager,
No.2 Refining Section,
Sakaide Refinery,
Cosmo Oil Co., Ltd.

I think the situation in the disaster area after the Great East Japan Earthquake has affected everyone so deeply that we all wish we could volunteer to help. Feeling a bit envious of Mr. Ishibashi’s ability to take action, I sent him off with my best wishes for a safe return. After coming back from his volunteer leave, it was obvious that his awareness had been changed by the experience. In the future, if an employee indicates a desire to take volunteer leave, I will gladly agree to the request. I would like my staff to gain personal growth by learning from experiences they cannot have anywhere else.

Labor and management are working together to deepen communication and achieve the best work methods for individual employees.

Balancing Work and Home Life

The Third Consolidated Medium-Term Human Rights/Personnel Plan identifies child/family care leave and leisure activities as important elements for employees to balance work and home life, and focuses on enhancing various systems to provide better support. With regard to supporting leisure activities, one of the plan's targets is that employees would actually take 80% or more of their annual paid leave, thereby increasing the number of days off taken by all employees. The goal was achieved in fiscal 2011 at an average rate of 86.0%, which represents a slight decline over the previous fiscal year (86.2%). Out of the 18 Cosmo Oil Group companies that were targeted for increasing the percentage of employees taking paid leave, 11 saw an improvement over the previous year.

The fourth action plan required for general business owners for fiscal 2011–2012¹ was submitted to Japan's Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, as part of Cosmo Oil's measures to support the raising of the next generation of children. The applicable law was revised in April 2011, requiring participation by additional Cosmo Oil Group companies. As one of these companies, Cosmo Trade & Service Co., Ltd. has shown progress, including the number of eligible employees taking childcare leave.

1. Action plan required for general business owners: These plans outline timeframes, objectives, and duration of implementation for measures to support and enhance working conditions for workers who are raising children.

Comment from Childcare Leave Recipients at Cosmo Trade & Service

I did not hesitate to request childcare leave, since the company's great support system includes subsidies for using childcare facilities and shorter working hours. When I was ready to come back to work, I again felt very supported. Being welcomed back after more than a year off felt really good, setting my mind at ease. Thanks to the warm support that I have received from both the company and my colleagues, I am able to fulfill my dual roles as a mother and a member of the workforce.



Saori Igarashi
Insurance & Lease Department,
Cosmo Trade & Service Co., Ltd.

I worried about what would happen with my job after having a baby. But I really wanted to keep working, so I looked into childcare leave and decided to keep my job. Thanks to the leave, I was able to watch my newborn grow and enjoyed a lot of time for bonding. Although there was a new supervisor by the time I came back to work, I was welcomed back with kindness and assistance. It was the support of my family, superiors and others that enabled me to return to work, so I am very grateful to all concerned.



Miyuki Kokubu
Fukuoka Branch,
Cosmo Trade & Service Co., Ltd.

Respecting Diversity and Providing Equal Opportunities

The Cosmo Oil Group set the goal of maintaining and improving its employment rate of people with disabilities, under the theme of sustaining fair employment practices. Working hard to meet the goal, in fiscal 2011 the Group achieved Japan's legally mandated rate of 1.8% or more, with a result of 2.19%. The relevant law will be revised in fiscal 2013 requiring a higher rate of 2.0%. Accordingly, the Group will ensure compliance with the new requirement, through measures that aim to create workplace environments where diverse human resources can demonstrate their different abilities to the full extent.

Cosmo Oil Group Employee Appears in Career Support DVD for University Students with Disabilities

Megumi Morisaki, who works in the Payroll Department of Cosmo Business Support Co., Ltd., appeared in a DVD produced by the Postsecondary Education Programs Network of Japan (PEPNet-Japan), as a model case of a person with hearing challenges excelling in a corporate environment. Since joining the company, Morisaki has worked hard to communicate with those around her, and has been recognized for her leadership role in the workplace. These accomplishments led to her selection for the DVD.



Megumi Morisaki
Payroll Department,
Cosmo Business
Support Co., Ltd.

Someone who has seen the DVD told me that she wants to show it to many other people of all abilities, saying the DVD communicates its content very effectively. I am happy to think that it will be helpful and encouraging for all kinds of people and not just students with hearing challenges. Also, I am filled with gratitude to all the supervisors and senior colleagues who have generously taught me over the years. Thinking that it would be a waste not to share this knowledge, I saw the DVD as a valuable opportunity to give something back.

The Postsecondary Education Programs Network of Japan (PEPNet-Japan)
Official site: www.pepnet-j.com/ (in Japanese only)

