



Toyota Motor Corporation (Technical Service Division) Envisioning the Future of Car Servicing Kaizen meets Design Thinking (Innovation)

Toyota Motor Corporation's Technical Service Division, which supports around 40,000 service technicians nationwide, opened its Tajimi Service Center to enhance the training of service technicians and to expedite R&D on vehicle repair technologies. The Center has introduced Fujitsu's Design Thinking concept to create a vision map of the 'preferred future' for service technicians. It also set up the Technical Service Development Laboratory (TSDL) as a venue to trigger innovation aimed at realizing this future. These activities have led to changing ways of working and have fostered a climate for actively encouraging new ideas. Using a combination of Kaizen (incremental improvement) and innovation brought about by Design Thinking, the Technical Service Division aims to create new ideas and unlock the future for automobiles and services.

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We attach equal weight to Kaizen and innovation brought about by Design Thinking. They help improve the motivation of each and every division member. I hope we can use the TSDL to realize ideas obtained through Design Thinking and create a solid future for our service technicians.

*Jingo Ohashi,
General Manager (formerly), Technical Service
Division, Customer First Promotion Group, TMC*

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Methodology to set out the future workstyles of service technicians

Since its establishment in 1937, Toyota Motor Corporation (TMC) has sought to 'create a prosperous society through automobiles.' In Japan alone, Toyota has some 5,000 service centers with 40,000 employees nationwide; all committed to ensuring that customers can continue driving cars with peace of mind. Its Technical Service Division provides a range of support facilities to make full use of the skills of its service technicians. In January 2016, the division opened its Tajimi Service Center to enhance personnel development and provide better services to customers around the

world. According to Jingo Ohashi (General Manager (formerly), Technical Service Division, Customer First Promotion Group, TMC), "The aim of setting up the Tajimi Service Center was to train leaders in auto servicing to a level that would give them greater skills and depth of experience, and enable them to return to the field to deploy their enhanced knowledge." Tatsuya Inoue (General Manager (formerly), Project Management Dept., Technical Service Division, TMC) recounts, "The main challenge was trying to decide what sort of novel things we could do at the Tajimi Service Center. We knew we needed to think deeply about the future and pursue our tasks accordingly. We were struggling to understand the direction of future workstyles of service technicians and what we needed to do to discover the answer."

Teaming up with Design Thinking to clarify "preferred future" for service technicians

Technical Service Division struggled to decide how to go about setting its own tasks. The division then received a proposal from Fujitsu centred on 'Design Vision', a concept that leverages Design Thinking*. This proposal involved creating a vision map of the 'preferred future' rather than the 'ideal future' and visualizing what the service technicians wanted to do. Because this was consistent with issues recognized by the Technical Service Division, Fujitsu set

(*1) Creative strategies designers use during the process of identifying and solving problems to design it that anyone can take advantage of.

up Vision Design workshops for the division. To make the workshops more effective, the Fujitsu facilitation designer carried out preliminary fieldwork^{*2} and conducted the workshops at Fujitsu's co-creation space, intentionally separated from day-to-day work environments in order to generate new ideas.

Participants in the workshops employed a process called 'back-casting,' where you create a preferred future (vision) then translate it to what you can achieve now. The approach is aimed at realistic methods that anyone can embrace to create perspectives and ideas in order to create a preferred future. The designer transformed the results into a vision map, and the Technical Service Division used the map to brief others in the company on its future aims and aspirations.

The Technical Service Division set up the Technical Service Development Laboratory (TSDL) in April 2016. This created a new space for open innovation to develop future-oriented services and to work towards realizing the preferred future set out in the vision map. The main focus was HR development. As part of this, the Technical Service Division encouraged activities that would inspire participants to think about the things they wanted to do at TSDL and thus incorporate Design Thinking into their daily work routines. The main theme of the workshop, held once a week, is Workstyle Innovation for Service Technicians of the Future. For example, their current focus is on brainstorming ideas and developing prototypes of the auto repair tools to be used in the service bays of the future. These activities are producing prototypes and some of them may become reality in the near future.

“Incremental Improvement x Innovation” to unlock the future for workstyles and corporate culture

Design Thinking also plays a part in changing the workstyles of the Technical Service Division. According to Akira Shinada (Assistant Manager, Technical Service Division, TMC), “When I first became involved in Design Thinking, I was surprised to find that such a methodology existed.” He says that by focusing on what he wanted to do and what he wanted to become in the future, his motivation to work increased and every day was enjoyable. The corporate culture is changing too. The Technical Service Division now hears fewer and fewer negative remarks, and an atmosphere of accepting diversity and being willing to actively cultivate new ideas is now emerging. Tatsuya Inoue comments, “The Design Thinking proposed by Fujitsu was extremely motivating for us. To get things done, you need a place, a time and a method. Together with the place and time provided by the Tajimi Service Center, Design Thinking played an important role as the methodology for triggering free thinking.” The Technical Service Division aims to continue its focus on Design Thinking, led by TSDL, and introduce the methodology to other people in the company and have them become involved. Jingo Ohashi concludes, “Kaizen (Toyota’s area of expertise) and innovation brought about by Design Thinking both



carry equal weight for us. We'll be able to create new value by integrating these concepts. This is what we will use to usher in the future for our service technicians, as well as the future for cars and car servicing.”

Customer Profile

Technical Service Division (Tajimi Service Center), Toyota Motor Corporation

Address: 1-1-1 Yamabuki-cho, Tajimi City, Gifu
Opened: January 2016
Employees: Approx. 800

Information for Customers (headquarters) Toyota Motor Corporation

Address: 1 Toyota-cho, Toyota City, Aichi
Established: 1937
Employees: 364,445 (consolidated; as of March 31, 2017)
Website: <http://www.toyota.co.jp/>

(*2) Collection of information by interviews and survey outside of the workshop (in this case, this was at service factory of stores) to get objective ideas