

“What we are looking to achieve through work style innovation is open collaboration across our organization, sharing knowledge among employees and creating a vibrant company.”

Masaharu Kubo, Representative Director
Senior Managing Executive Officer
Mitsui Chemicals, Inc.

Work style innovation encourages creativity, harnessing the aspirations of all employees.

At a glance

Country: Japan

Industry: Manufacturing and Distribution

Founded: 1955

Employees: 14,363 (as of March 31, 2015)

Website: www.mitsuichem.com

Challenge

Mitsui Chemicals, Inc. wanted to raise the level of business innovation capability across the company to encourage creativity on the part of all employees.

Solution

Mitsui Chemicals singled out the Fujitsu reference model before implementing a new information system. A lean and efficient office was achieved using cloud and Unified Communications (UC) tools from Fujitsu.

Benefit

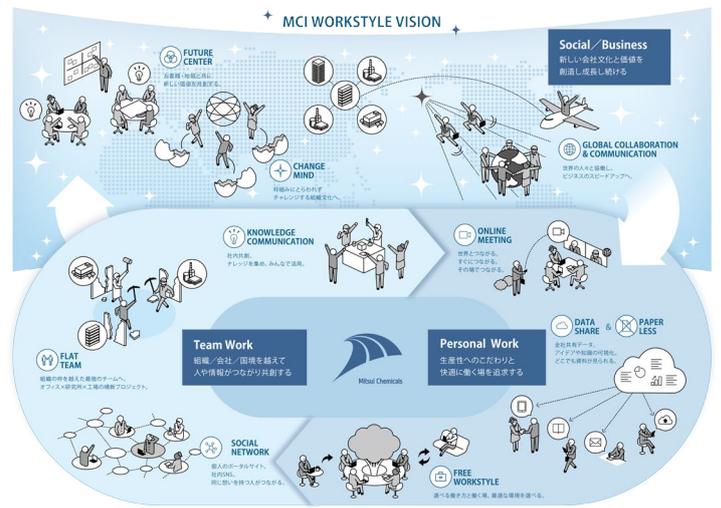
- Raises the expectations and enthusiasm remote staff
- Improves communications throughout the Mitsui Chemicals Group
- Office space is used more effectively
- Enables employees to communicate across the divide between different departments and teams

Customer

Mitsui Chemicals, Inc. is one of Japan's leading diversified chemicals companies. The firm traces its origins back more than 100 years to 1912, when it started out as a coke chemical producer. It quickly became one of the largest in Japan and continues to grow by producing resins and other industrial products, as well as the base materials for daily household consumables.

Products and services

■ Fujitsu Unified Communications



Challenge

Based on a three-pronged business strategy encompassing the economy, environment, and society, Mitsui Chemicals embarked on a program of business innovation activities designed to help solve problems in society.

Under the principal theme "Creating New Customer Value Through Innovation", the program was launched as part of the company's 2014 Mid-Term Business Plan. The plan identified Mobility, Healthcare, and Food & Packaging as the three target segments that would drive future growth through social contribution, accelerating profit growth and the growth of next-generation business.

Strengthening these target segments is not the only step to be taken by Mitsui Chemicals in its drive to create new customer value. The company has also been engaged in a work style innovation project designed to encourage creativity on the part of all employees. The aim is to raise the level of business innovation capability across the company as a whole.

Solution

The work style innovation project began in late 2013, ahead of the launch of the Mid-Term Business Plan. Considering the impact generated by improving communications throughout the Mitsui Chemicals Group, it was important to invest in both tools and the spaces that would spur communication. So in addition to implementing a new information system, the company also started working toward using its office space more effectively.

Not only would a new ICT system create a much more pleasant place to work, but this would enable employees to communicate across the divide between different departments and teams. In drawing up the blueprint for such an exercise, Mitsui Chemicals singled out the Fujitsu reference model.

The head offices of both Mitsui Chemicals and Fujitsu are located in the same building, so they each have the same floor layout. However, at the time of the project Fujitsu had 40 percent more employees occupying a single floor than Mitsui Chemicals. Even so, flow planning allowed smooth movement of staff so that it didn't feel cramped, and a lean and efficient office was achieved using cloud and Unified Communications (UC) tools.

In addition to this, Mitsui Chemicals agreed to the work style concept presented by Fujitsu. "Unless employees change their way of thinking, the new office environment and diversified communications would not work effectively. The vision for work style innovation needed to be shared among all Mitsui Chemicals employees." Fujitsu was appointed as the company's work style innovation partner.

Mitsui Chemicals first organized a workshop where employees could think about and discuss ideas on how to change their work style. In consultation with Fujitsu, a team of around 40 people, consisting of junior and mid-level staff from each department in the head office, attended the workshop to discuss where they wanted to be and how they wanted to be working in the future. Their ideas helped to formulate a vision for how the company's work style would look within three years.

Benefit

What is unique about the Mitsui Chemicals project is that based on the 400+ ideas that emerged from the workshop, the participants produced video sketches of several work scenarios, such as participating in online meetings from any location and searching for in-house experts. Having fun together while focusing on co-creating a future way of working, they reportedly raised the expectations and enthusiasm of staff that often work outside of the office and had previously felt left out of the loop.

To give substance to the vision formulated at the workshop, the company prepared a plan that detailed actual policies to be adopted and ICT infrastructure to be deployed. From December 2014, the company gradually started deploying the UC tools and other new ICT infrastructure required to provide web conferencing and instant messaging functionality. Fujitsu was consistently involved in the project - from the workshop through to deployment of new ICT solutions - in the triple role of consultant, designer, and engineer. Mitsui Chemicals praised Fujitsu for "excellent instruction in how work style gathers together diverse personalities."

Mitsui Chemicals' work style innovation project has only just begun. The company will continue to press forward with work style innovation by introducing guidelines and plans to fully achieve a new work style in the office and maximize the benefits of the new ICT system.

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