

THIRD PARTY COMMENTS



Dr. Kenji Suzuki

Dean and Professor of the School of Global Japanese Studies, Meiji University, Japan

Dr. Suzuki received an LLB degree from Tokyo University, a master's degree from the London School of Economics, and PhD in Politics and International Studies from the University of Warwick. His field of specialization is political economy. Representative Director and Chief of the Japan Institute of Scandinavian Studies (JISS).

He currently focuses on how environmental changes in society and economy change the nation's social system and affect the psychology and behavior of companies and people. He has a decade of experience in being involved with education and research in Sweden.

The 17 icons for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations jumped out at me as soon as I opened this 2018 CSR Report. The concept of SDGs was spread by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit) in 1992, and is understood even by children nowadays. However, these are easier said than done, and it is true that the world is just barely shifting toward achieving the SDGs even 16 years later.

By the way, what does "Sustainable Development" originally mean? This concept originates in a 1987 report published by the Brundtland Commission, which was formerly known as the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), called, "Our Common Future". The report defines this as follows, "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". In other words, while it is important to pursue short-term profits, these must not be at the expense of future possibilities. As mentioned earlier, this is very difficult to realize in practice. However, I think it is commendable that you raise the Brundtland definition in "Our Common Future" as CSR and clearly position a variety of activities you have done in such a framework.

This report indicates which SDGs goals each of the topics that make up our CSR fall under. It is a good idea to understand what approach you are using for each topic. For example, the topic of governance falls under the goals of "Reduced Inequalities" and "Peace, justice and strengthen institutions". The United Nations promotes discussion with countries and societies in mind. It seems to be difficult to put a single company in this framework. However, a company is a part of society, thus it is all right for people who work for the company to consider these goals dominate forces in their lives. Therefore, it is of extreme importance that equality, peace and fairness be prioritized in company management solutions and establishment of governance. So when these are defined in this report, third parties like me can improve our understanding. Also, your employees can confirm which policies the organizations they serve are operating in

accordance with.

With regard to the topic of society, Promoting Recruitment, Participation and Advancement of Non-Japanese Employees was newly included in this report. In particular, my attention was drawn to training for employees and disclosure of data. Since I myself have worked many years overseas and also communicate with over 100 international students every year, I am quite aware how culturally exclusive Japanese companies are. As indicated in the data, the number of non-Japanese employees is still quite small but is definitely increasing. What is of greater importance is the training for those who accept new non-Japanese workers, as opposed to training for those who join the company. This is not just simply about high TOEIC score requirements. Instead, each of you is required to think about how to communicate with your subordinates or colleagues who have different cultural backgrounds and what is needed to produce positive results. It is understandable that those who come to Japan should learn Japanese and Japanese culture. However, if you just impose this idea of "When in Rome, do as the Romans do" on non-Japanese employees, you will never gain "new ideas, which are created when people with different personalities enlighten each other" as stated in MESSAGE FROM TOP MANAGEMENT. Toshiba Tec Group and many other Japanese companies are facing these issues. Therefore, it is necessary to fully recognize the reality that cannot be turned away from and actually address these issues as a Japanese company. These will in turn lead to another issue; how to maximize the strength of those who are not classified as the typical "male workaholic employee", such as female employees, employees with disabilities and seniors.

It is human nature to think that the actual conditions are not so bad...however, believing so is essentially just forcing future generations to address current issues such as environmental destruction. I expect you to further promote awareness reform in line with how this report defines the "SDGs".