

Building a Trusted Identity as a Contributing Member of the Global Community

The Yokohama Rubber Group seeks to build a trusted identity as a contributing member of the global community. Trust, however, is a two-way thing, and not something that we can build by ourselves. That is why we want you, our stakeholders, to know about our business activities as concretely as possible, and why we take your opinions as seriously as we do as we continue to reform ourselves. In this section, we review how the goals of “creating a workplace that values, improves, and energizes people” and “dealing fairly with society and valuing harmony with the environment” that form part of our corporate philosophy are actually put into practice through our employee programs and engagement with local communities.

Skills Meisters: Bedrock of manufacturing

35 certified Meisters now passing on their skills at tire and MB plants

The Skills Meister Program is a scheme for certifying highly skilled employees to supervise the training of their successors and the transfer of skills to other plants, and it was launched in October 2004 to counter the decline in human resources with specialist plant skills, the aging of the workforce, the loss of advanced skills due to employees' mandatory retirement, and the shortage of human resources needed to supervise overseas plant startups. As of the end of March 2009, there were 35 Skills Meisters (including both regular employees and employees re-hired after mandatory retirement) working at our tire and MB plants.

Motivating skilled workers

Skills Meisters are divided into three grades, each entailing different skills and work. There had not previously been any special system of certifying even the highly skilled workers regarded on the factory floor as the authorities to go to about production processes. The establishment of the Skills Meister Program, however, has given accredited workers prestige and ensured that their skills and experience are appropriately reflected in their pay and other

treatment, creating a major incentive for other workers to aspire to join their ranks. To become a Skills Meister, employees must be put forward by their departments and evaluated by a panel that includes directors among its members. As well as Skills Meisters, “Master Craftsmen” are also assessed and certified.

Outline of Skills Meister Program

Definitions of Skills Meister		
Specialist who possesses advanced skills that need to be maintained in the workforce and is capable of supervising the training of successors and the transfer of skills to other plants (including overseas)		
Rank	Minimum tenure	Skills required
A	25 years	Possesses an understanding of all production processes and advanced skills spanning multiple processes, and is capable of supervising and effecting improvements
B	15 years	Possesses an understanding of multiple processes and a high level of skill concerning processes for which he/she is responsible in general, and is capable of supervising and effecting improvements to the processes for which he/she is responsible
C	8 years	Understands and possesses advanced skills concerning his/her own process, and is capable of supervising and effecting improvements to this process
Definition of Master Craftsman		
Worker who is unanimously admired for his/her high skill level		