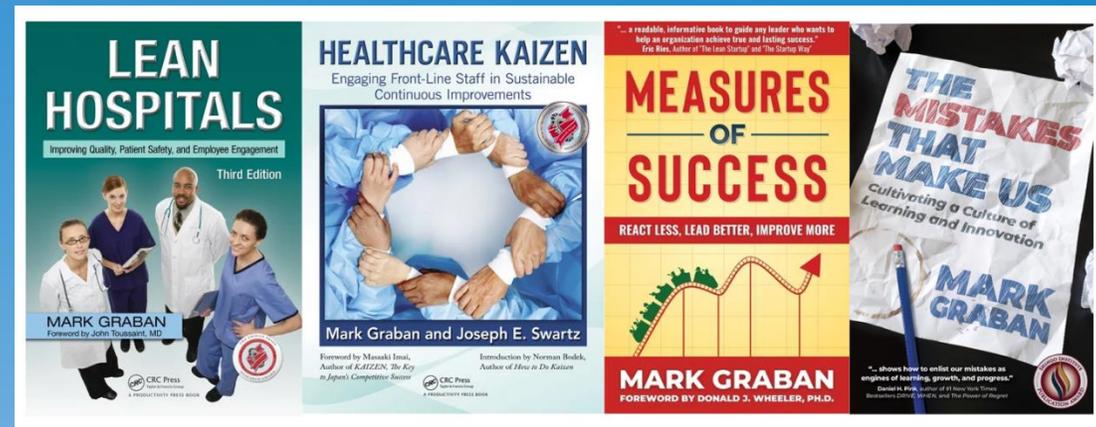


TRANSLATING EXCELLENCE: WHAT JAPAN'S TOP ORGANIZATIONS TEACH US ABOUT CULTURE AND RESULTS

A Leadership Perspective for Healthcare and Beyond



MARK@MARKGRABAN.COM

LINKS: MARKGRABAN.COM/CATALYSIS2025

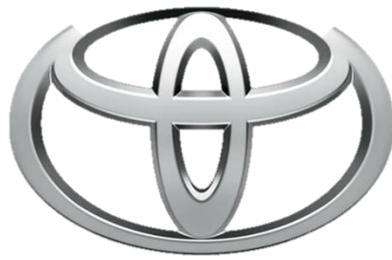
MINDSETS

1. Long-Term Thinking
2. Focus on People Development
3. Respectful Inquiry Over Directives
4. Improvement as Daily Discipline
5. Respect in Action at the Gemba
6. Systems that Enable, Not Punish
7. Adaptation Over Copying

IS TPS THE
DEFAULT IN
JAPAN?

A worker in a blue uniform and cap is seen from behind, pulling a yellow Andon cord. The cord is attached to a yellow light fixture hanging from the ceiling. The worker is standing next to a silver car body on an assembly line. The background shows other parts of the factory, including another worker and various mechanical components.

Andon Cord



TOYOTA



HONDA

Identity

System-driven (TPS)

Engineering-driven (founder-led)

Leadership Style

Humble, servant-leader,
process

Charismatic, individualistic, bold

Innovation Approach

Incremental, structured kaizen

Radical, experimental, risk-taking

Decision Process

Consensus-oriented, deliberate

Faster, entrepreneurial

Globalization

Codified system, transferable

Engineering ingenuity, less codified

Cultural Risk

Bureaucratic, conservative

Overly dependent on mavericks



“Many Americans came to Japan, but there was no medical example at that time.”

- Hospital leader, 2012

関中央院 外国人医療関係者が視察

“Focused Attention on Kaizen Activities”

“Foreign Healthcare Professionals Observe at Kanto Central Hospital”

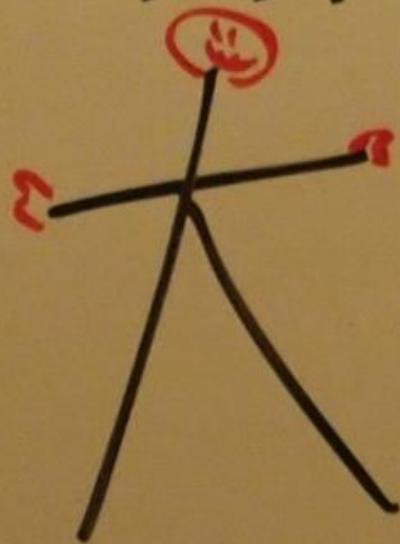


徹底的に無駄を省く
「カイゼン」活動を実
施する日本国内の病院
を視察しようと、外国
人の医療関係者らが19

日、関市平成通の関
央病院を訪れ、同病
院が取り組むカイゼン
について理解を深めた
スイスに本社を置

IS LEAN EASIER
IN JAPAN?

YAMATO



Big



Harmony



Kata



Good



No Good

“Rules are not made to be broken”



Photo by Katie Anderson, used with permission

Pressure to Be Quiet

- "Some are afraid to express their opinion" (factory visit)
- Speaking up to highlight problems "doesn't come naturally" to Japanese
- "The tall blade of grass..."





Good

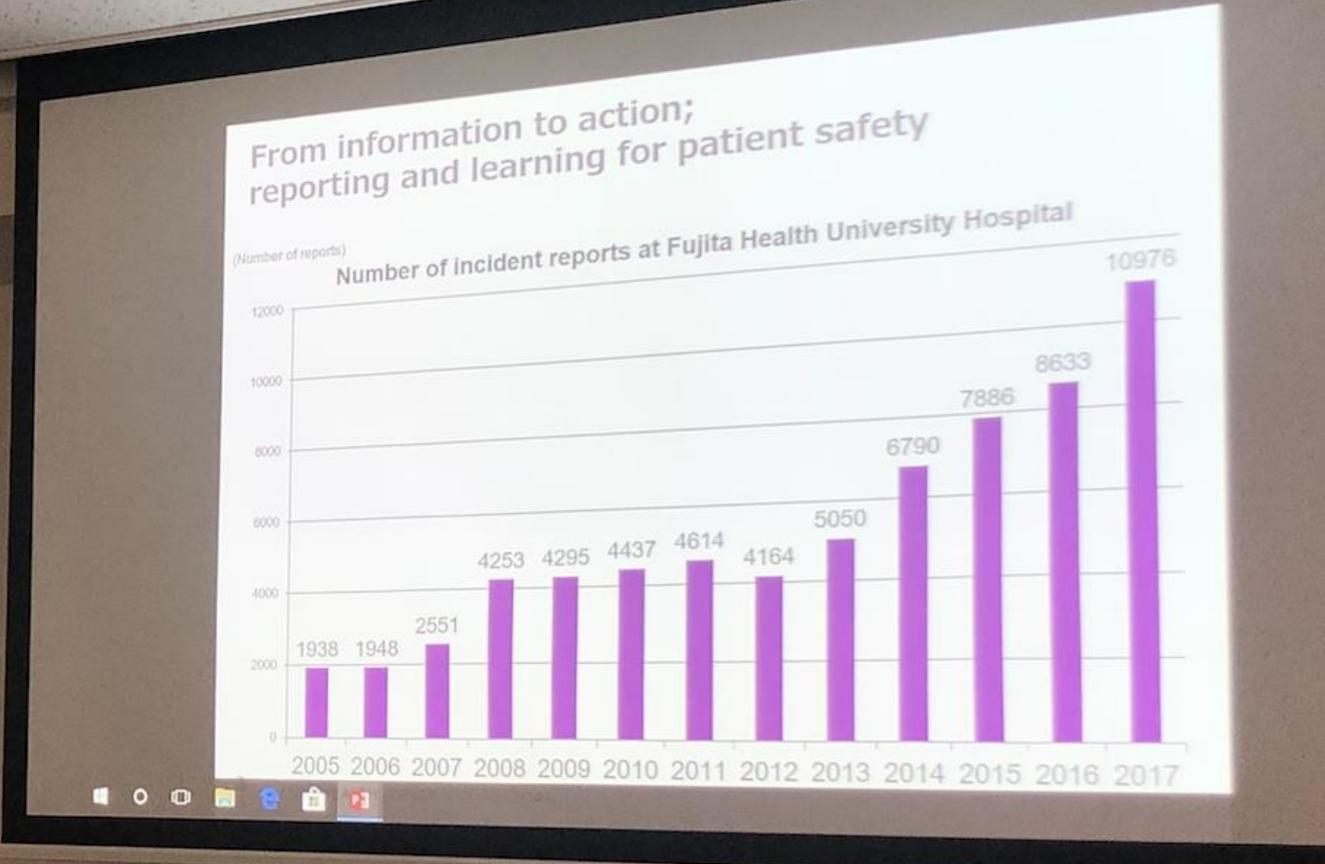
寿司料理

いの瀬

電
(3443)
一七一九番

“It would be difficult”





“Number of Incident Reports”

Japanese Hospitals Are Naturally Lean?

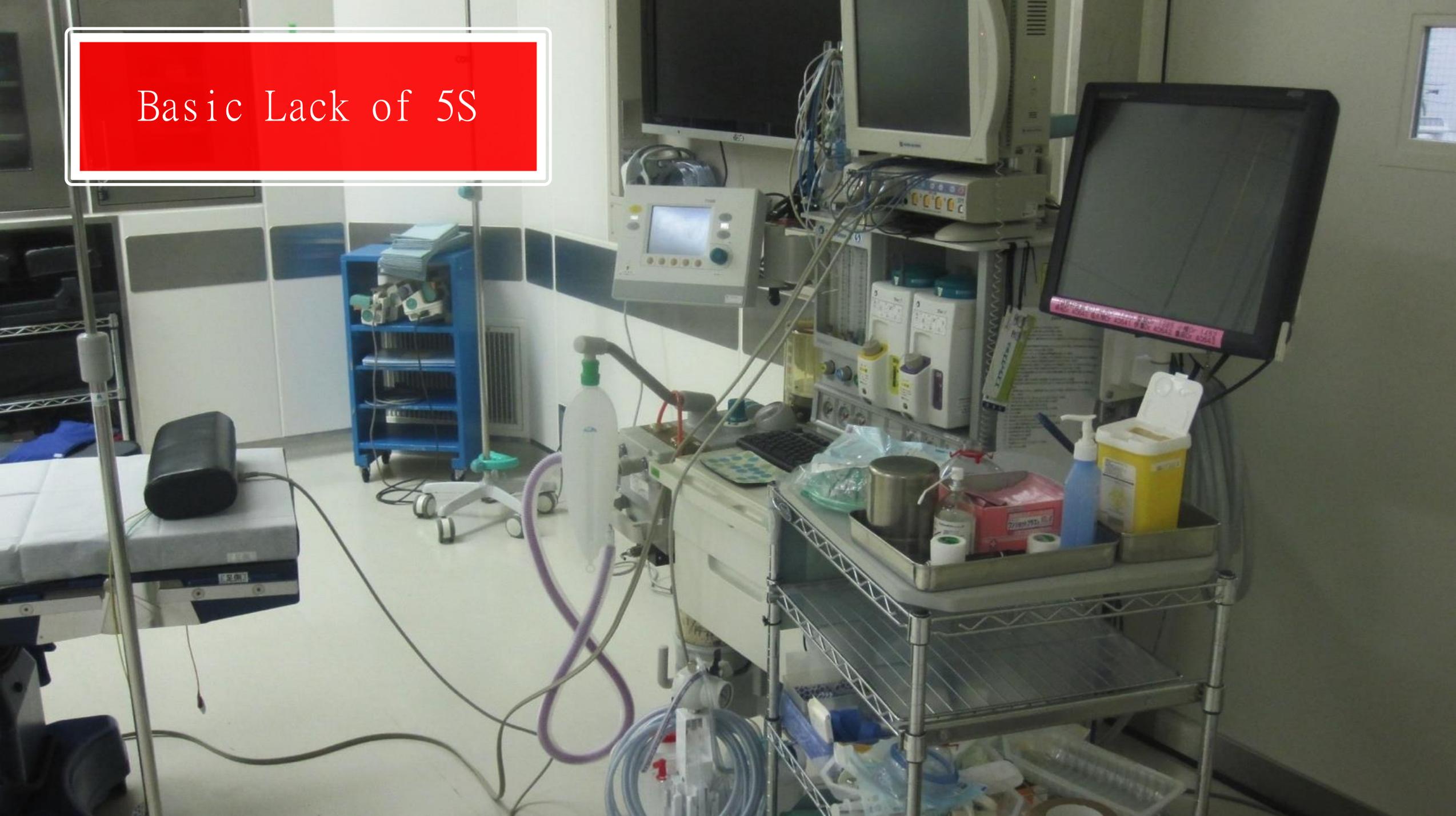
- Can be just as disorganized as other countries
- Barely scratching the surface on Lean methods?
- Lack of sterile OR core
- Classic medical culture





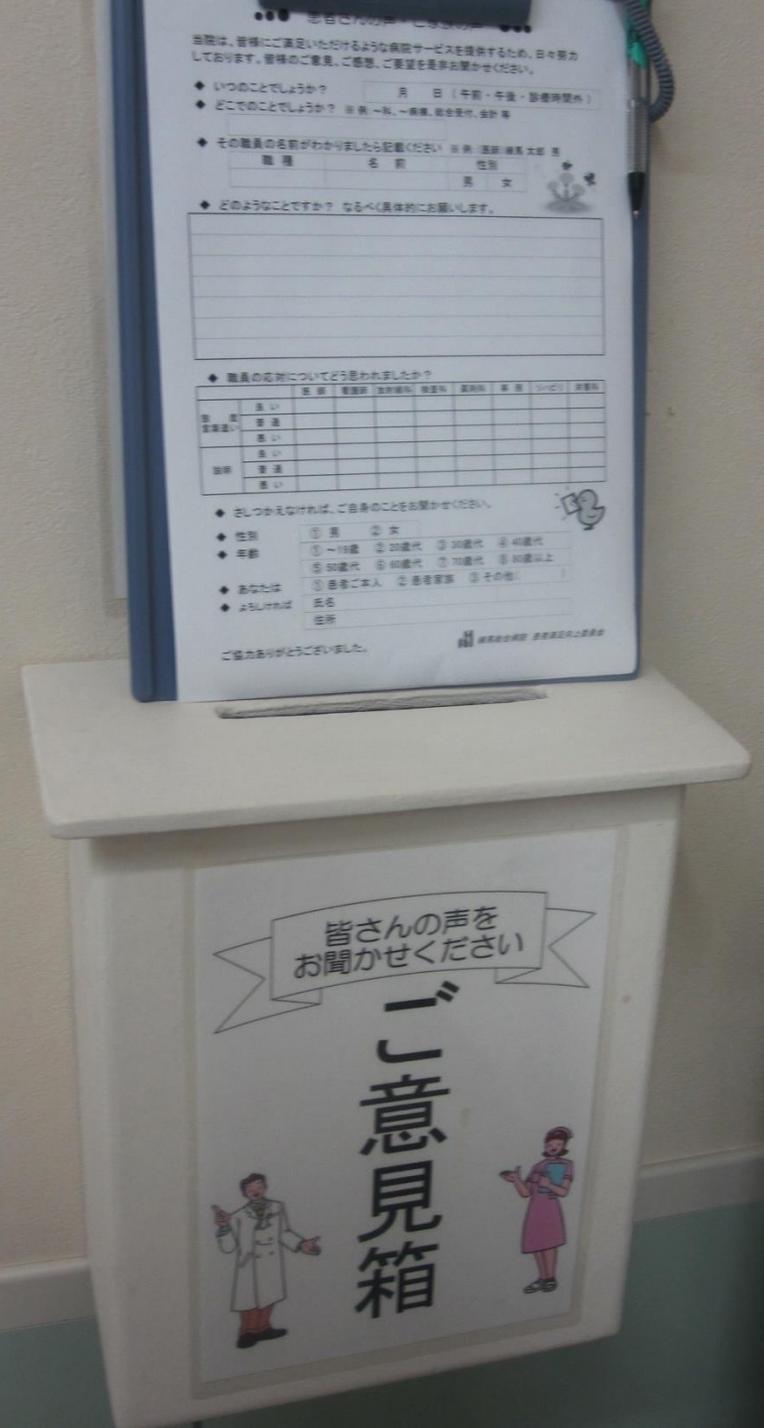
Just
As
Messy

Basic Lack of 5S



“The honorable
opinion box”

“Please let us hear
everyone’s voice”



Japanese Hospitals Learning from Americans

- Miwa Kudo
 - Worked at Virginia Mason Medical Center & Aso Iizuka Hospital
- Japanese hospitals visiting the U.S.
 - VMMC, Mayo, Brigham & Women's, Seattle Children's
- One hospital CEO said he learned Lean from IHI
 - Virginia Mason visited them





MINDSETS

CEO Leadership

2014.11.21

Welcome to Nerima General Hospital



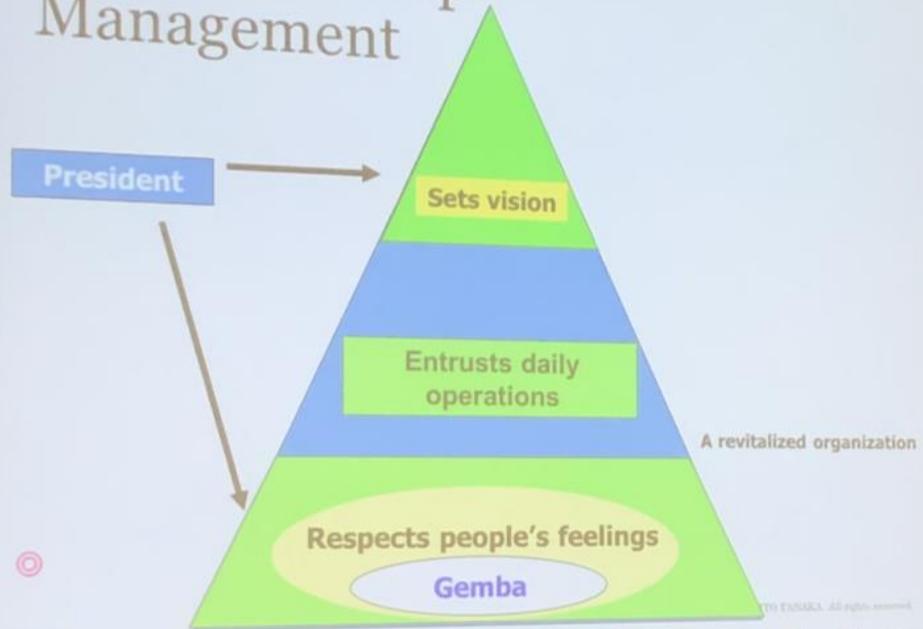
Public Interest Foundation Tokyo Healthcare Association
Nerima General Hospital
Shuhei Iida, CEO



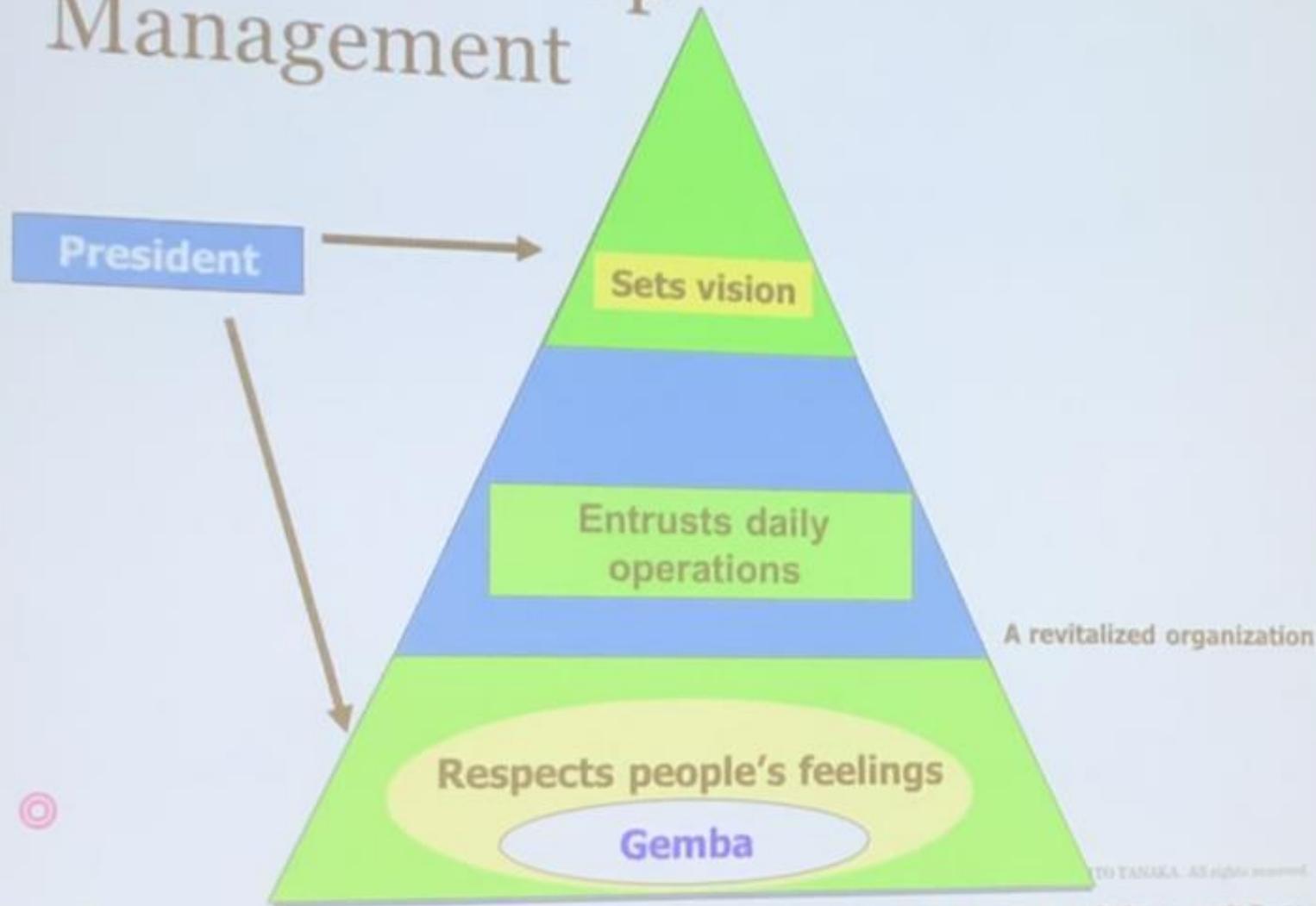
Characteristics of Medical Quality Improvement (MQI) Activities

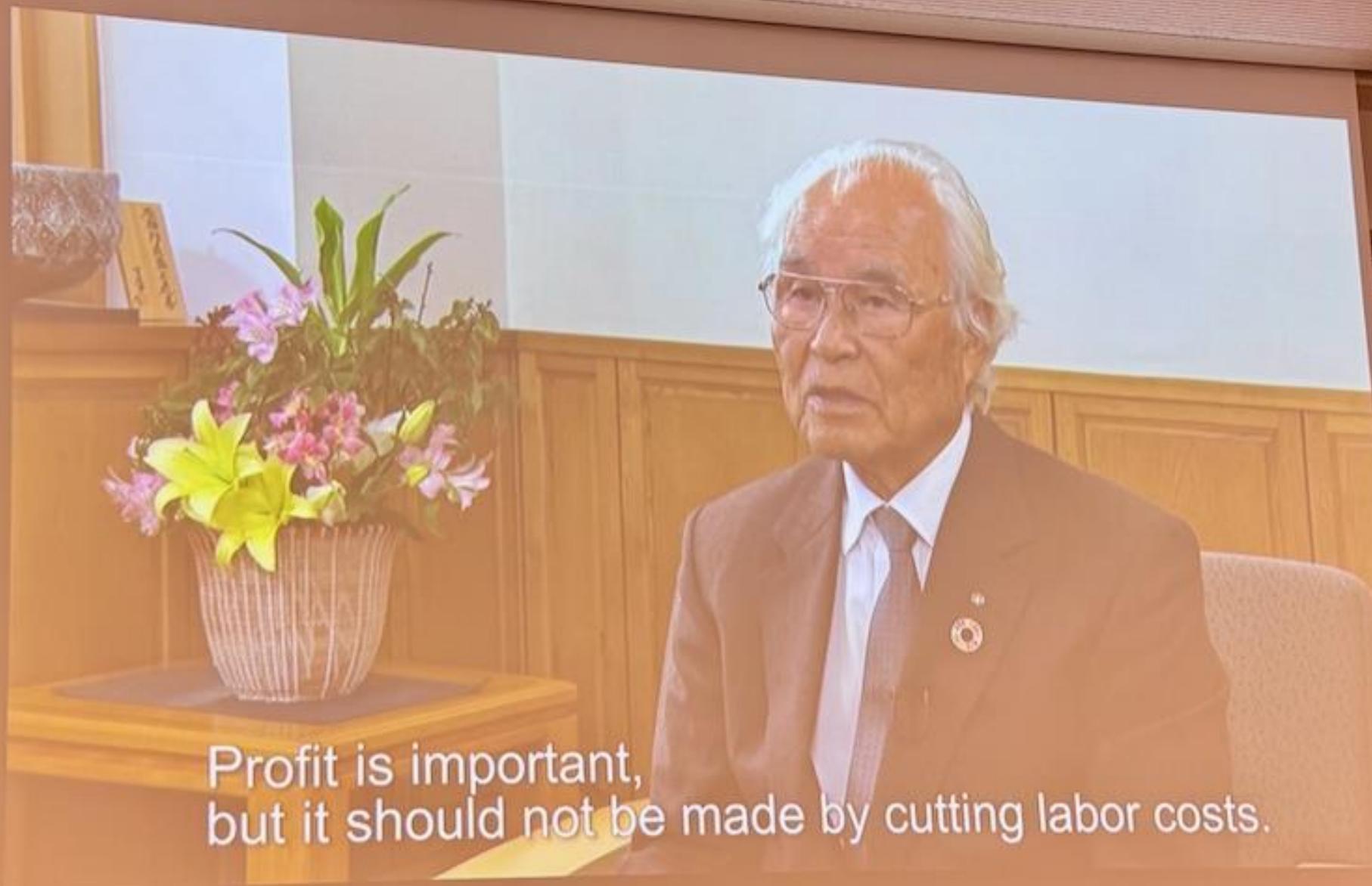
1. Not a copy of others, Unique to our hospital
2. Hospital Strategy
3. Recommend scientific approach
4. Doctors' Participation (mandatory)
5. Activities are training tools, and education ground
6. Hospital-wide Operation KAIZEN

The Role of Top Management



The Role of Top Management



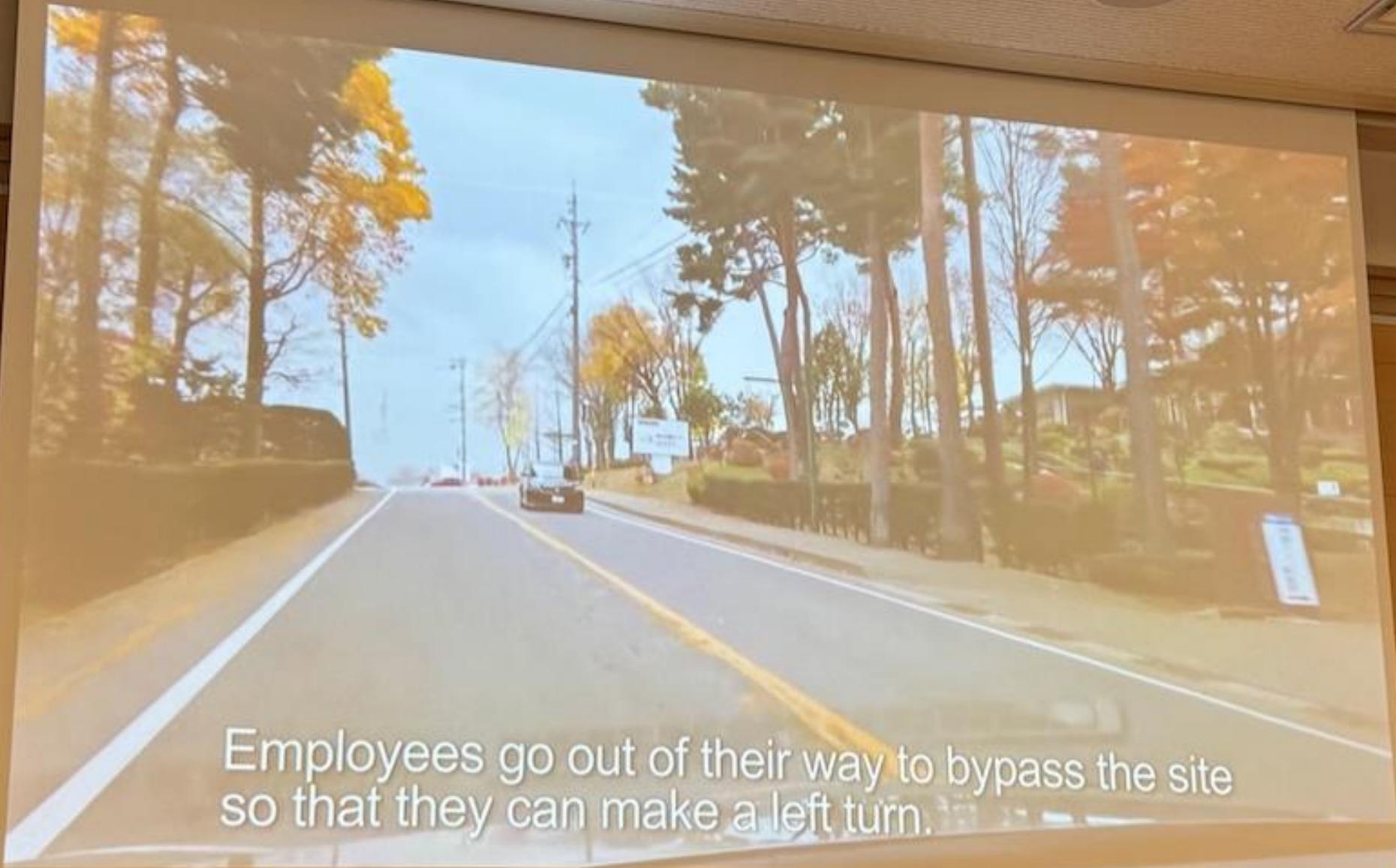


Profit is important,
but it should not be made by cutting labor costs.



Tree-Ring Management

” Profit is like excrement”



Employees go out of their way to bypass the site so that they can make a left turn.

“People Development” Companies



Barry McCarthy, Former Toyota (Australia)

“In October 2002, Toyota created the booklet “Toyota — Developing People” and distributed it to all associates to create a common understanding that

“the source of Toyota's competitiveness is human resources development”

and to promote the creation of

Workplaces where personnel development takes place at all sites and at all levels.”

Developing Professionals through "Human Capital-Centered Management"



- Think and act for yourself
- Continuous improvement
- Full participation

Professional team that "masters" high-accuracy cutting/grinding processing of small parts

= To become a centennial company

The basic rules are:

2S + Shining and Greeting



- Take a good care of things
- Teamwork
- Follow the rules
- Multi-skilled

Thoughtfulness



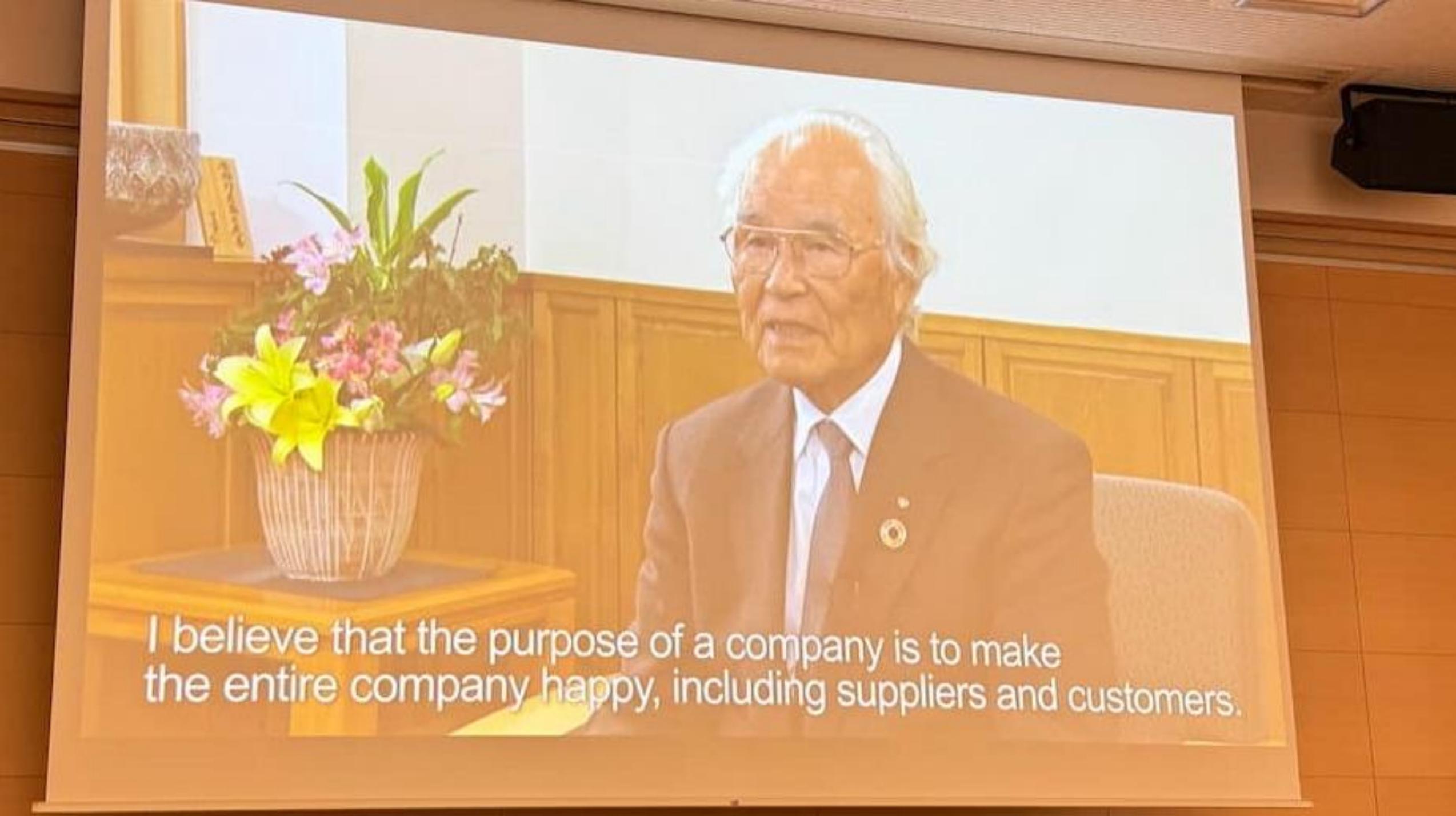
- Honest and sincere
- Employees can speak candidly
- Employees teach and learn from each other

Spirit of growing together



KAITEKI

- “comfort”
- “ease”
- “pleasant working environment”



I believe that the purpose of a company is to make the entire company happy, including suppliers and customers.

“If management makes employees feel happy, they will be more motivated... which will ultimately lead to customer satisfaction and trust.”

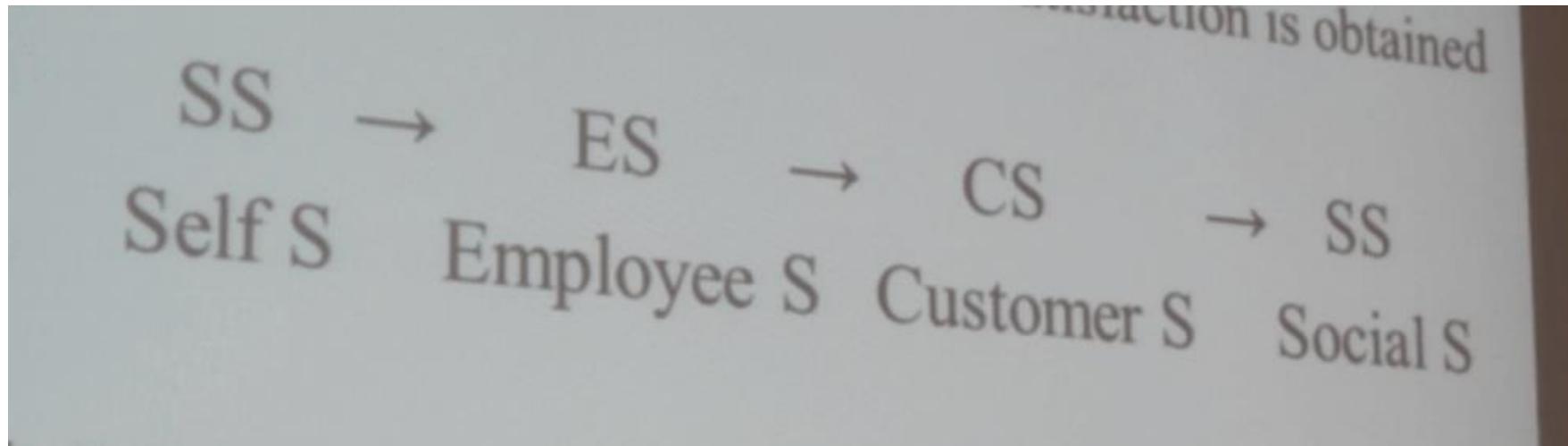


*

Management Philosophy of Nerima General Hospital

Revision 2001.1

“We provide healthcare services to make employee wish to work and feel rewarded, patients wish to be treated and feel good, experience community wish to existing the hospital and feel peace and good.”



Nerima General Hospital Regulations

Basic Concept of the Hospital

2002 Revised

2012 Revised

The philosophy of Nerima General Hospital states that **‘Provide healthcare to make employee happy to work for and feel rewarded, make patients wish to be treated and go home with pleasant experience, and make the community feel safe and good about the existence of the hospital’.**

Based on the philosophy we aim at healthcare and management to satisfy employee, patients and the community.

To realize the goal everybody needs to work together with a pride and trust and without fear and worries

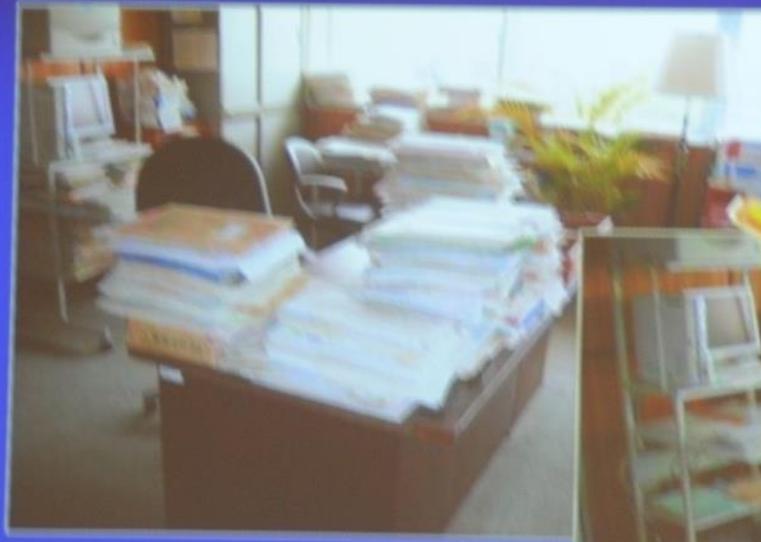
Staff First, Patients Second

- Happy employee → happy patients → happy community
- “I'm not a liar, so I don't say "patients first." Lots say it, but I've never seen anybody who really thinks of patients first. We are not saints, we are mediocre people, so self comes first. I'm just an honest person.”

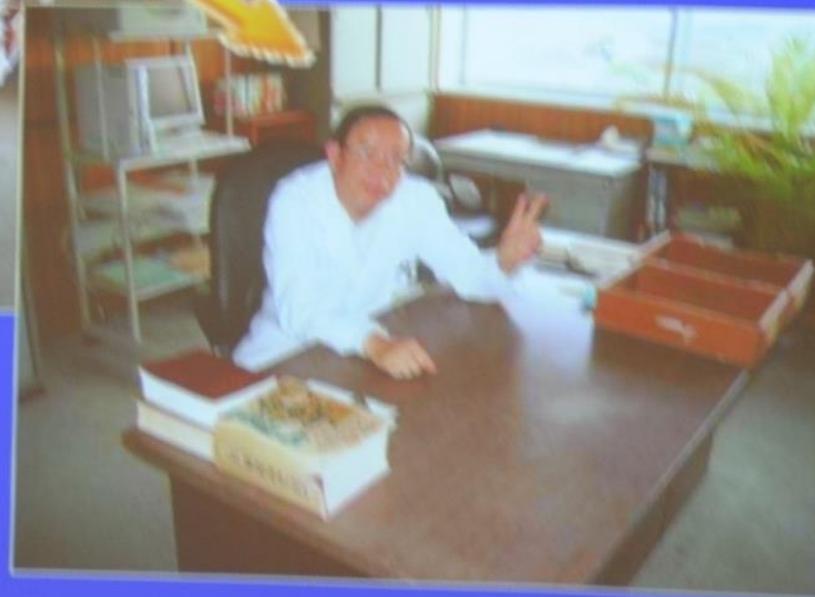


Hospital CEO Leading By Example

What we're trying to say is...

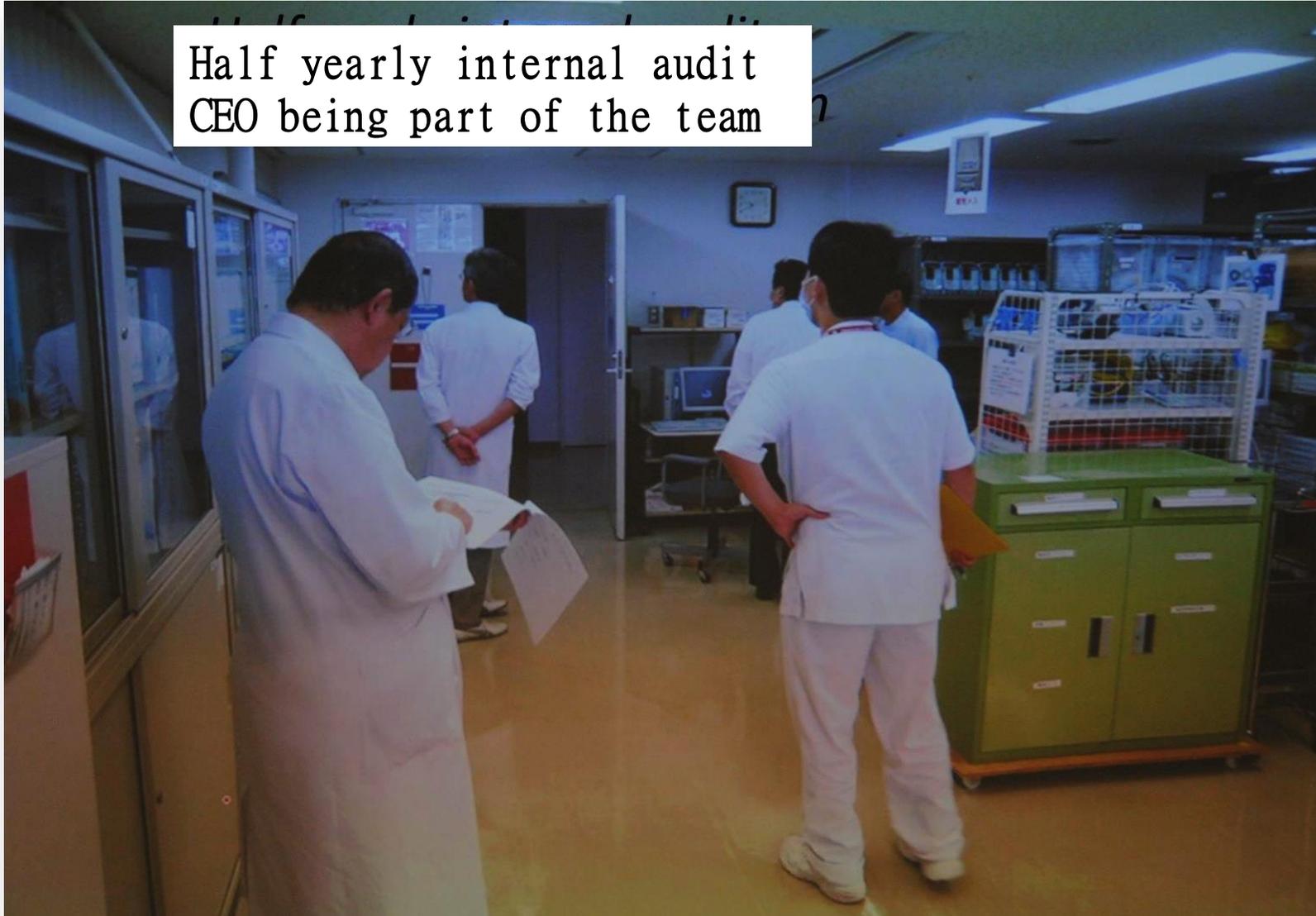


Hospital Director
Room
(CEO)



5S Audits by CEO

Half yearly internal audit
CEO being part of the team



CEO cleaning the floor
each morning with team



METHODS

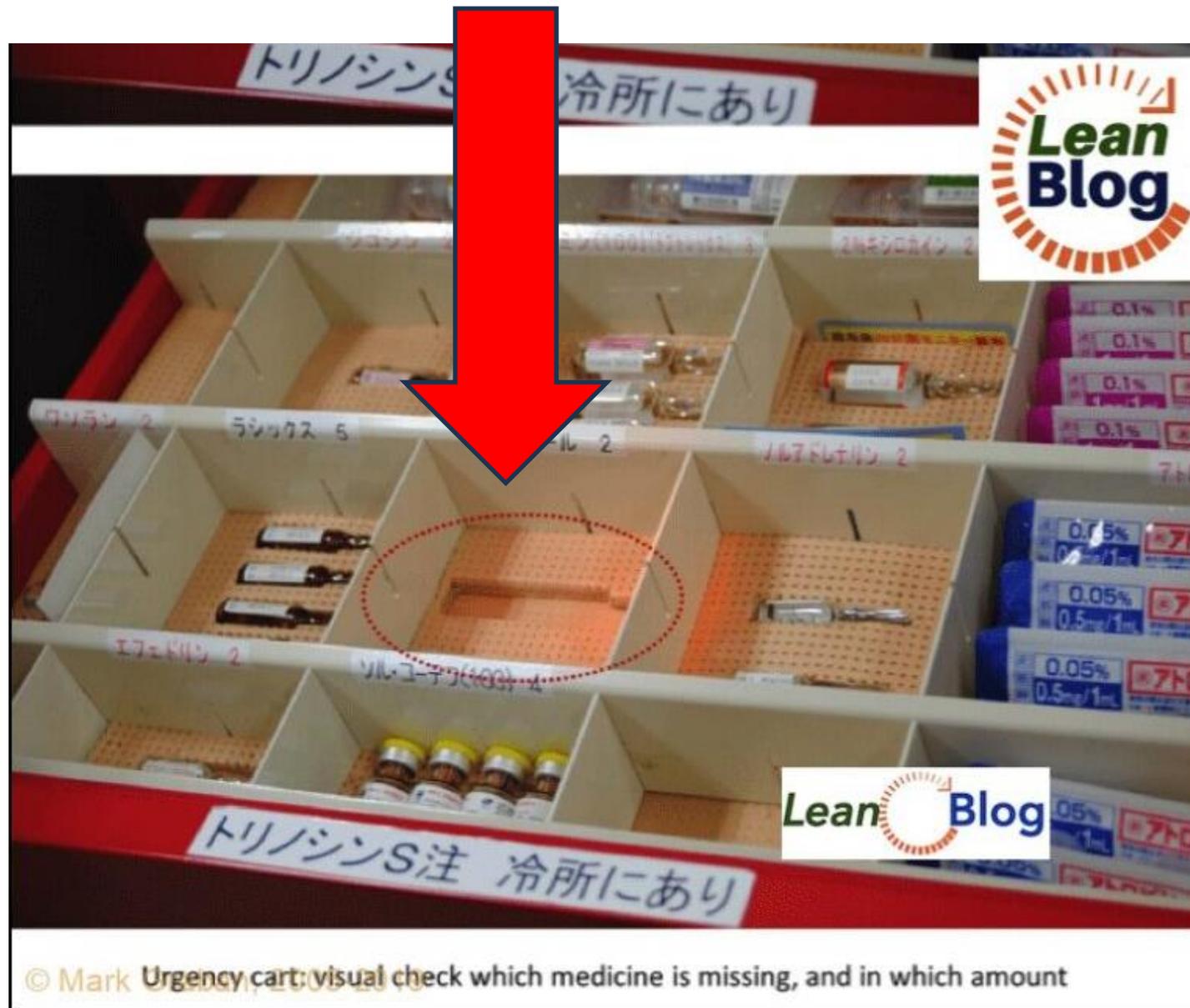


Hospital 5S

5S in Med Carts



5S in Med Carts



© Mark Urgency cart visual check which medicine is missing, and in which amount

5S Cutouts

5S 関連



5S – RN Station

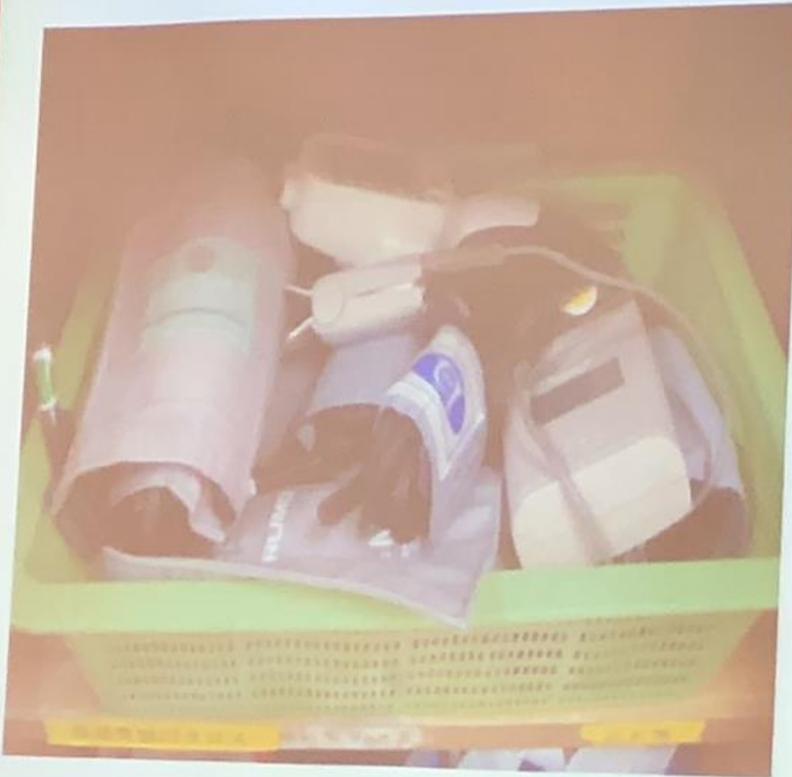


5S – Crutches

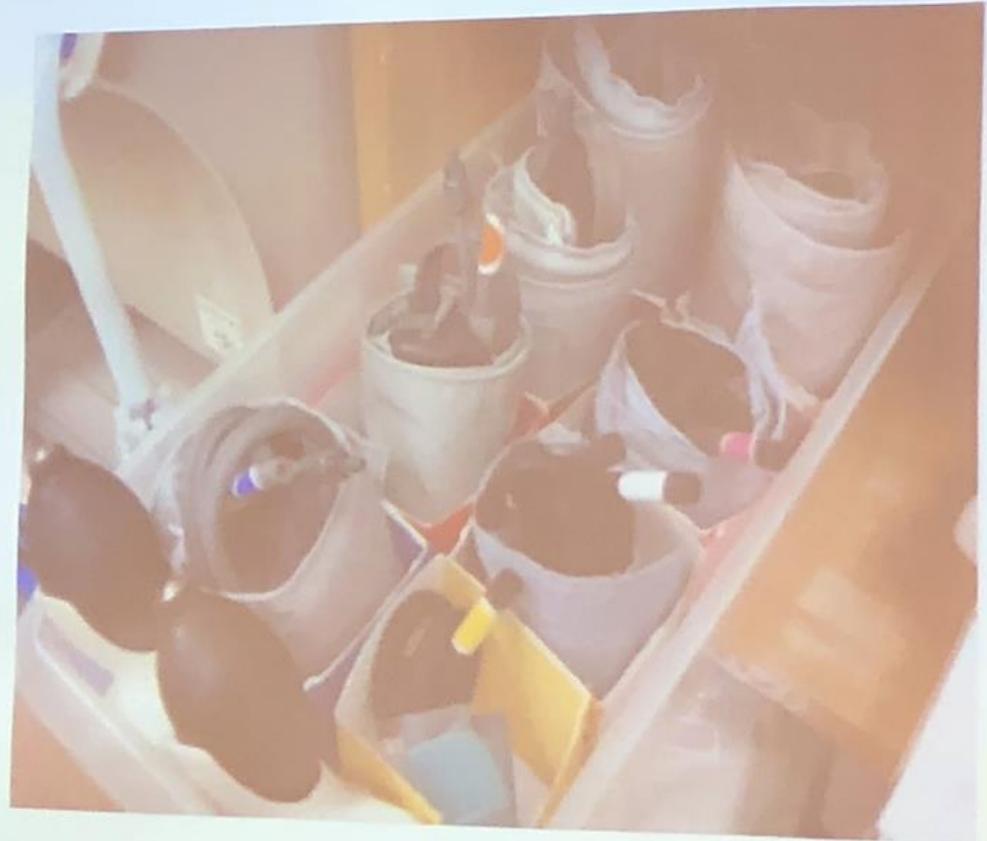


5S – Blood Pressure Cuffs

<Before>



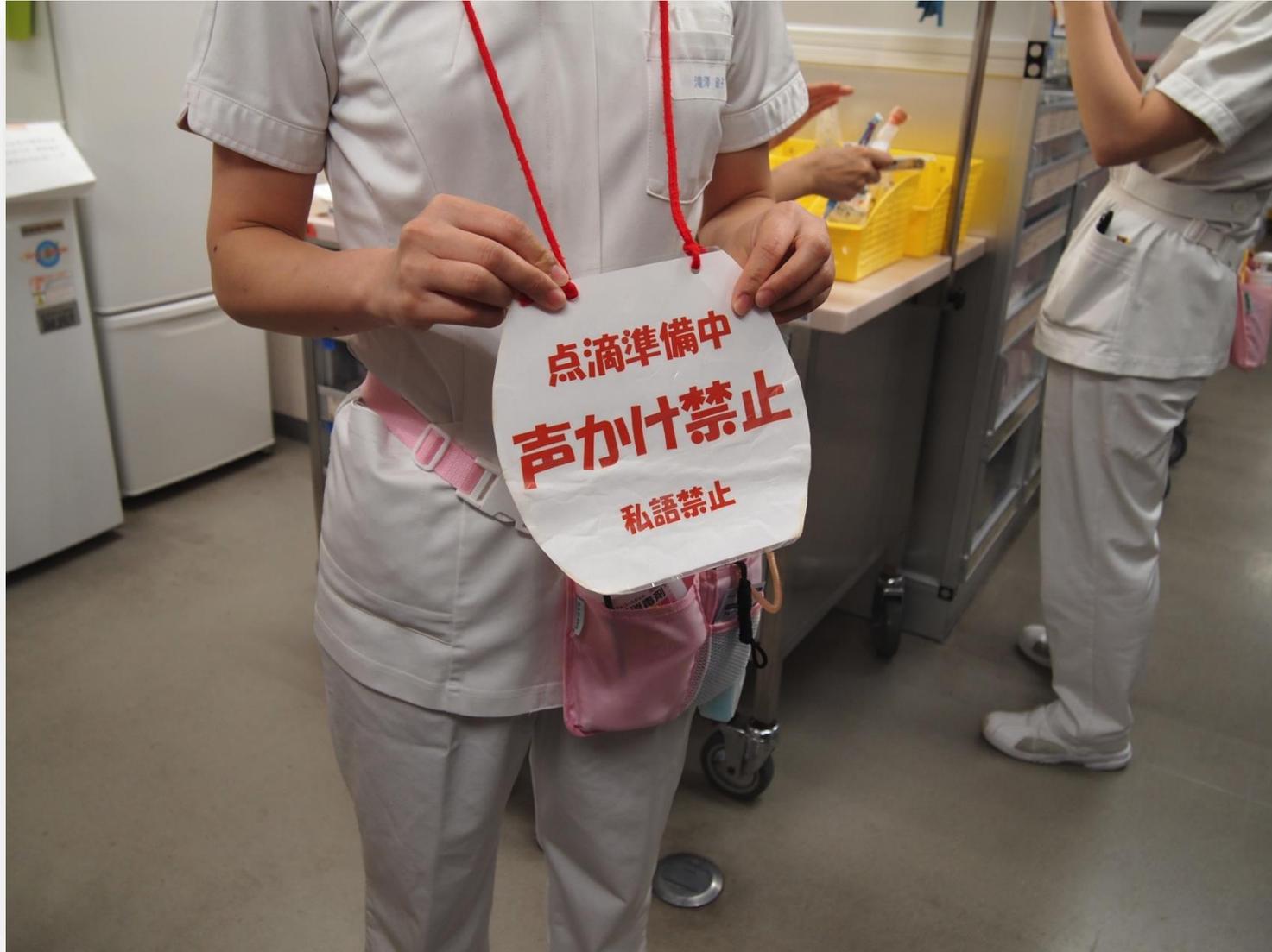
<After>



Nurse Bags



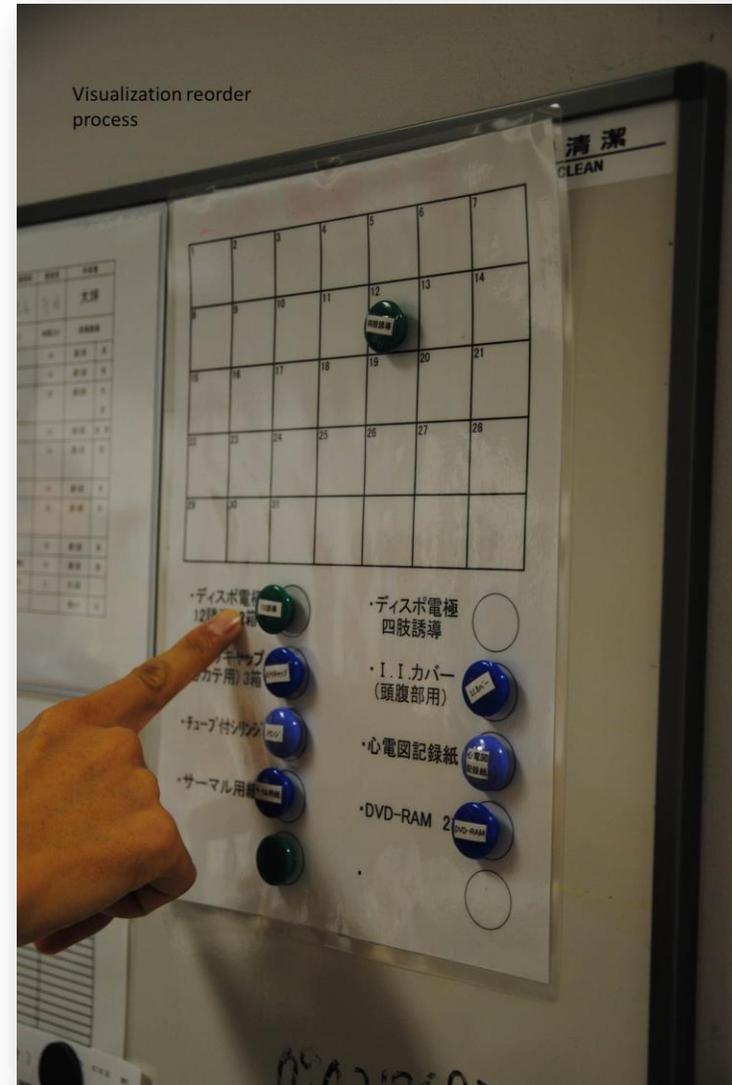
Do Not Disturb – Med Admin



RN Team Huddle – “FISH!”



Visual Re-Order / Kanban



Pharmacy Kanban



“We use the MRI to demagnetize the patient ID cards” (??)

Without MQI

3F



4F



5F



6F



With MQI



We have standard carts everywhere in the hospital!

Standardization

Maintaining emergency cart

Without MQI



To avoid shortage at emergency the cart was fully

Hard to immediately find what is needed.

With MQI



You can pick up what is needed immediately when needed at emergency.

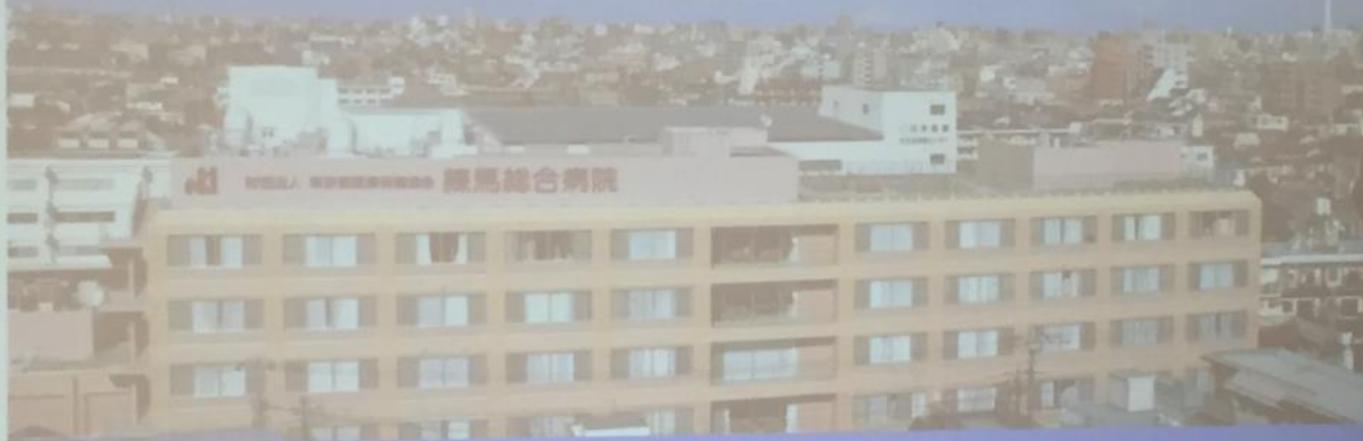
Easy to find what is needed when needed

KAIZEN

CULTURE

“I know kaizen because I’m Japanese.”

Welcome to Nerima General Hospital



Public Interest Foundation Tokyo Healthcare Association
Nerima General Hospital
Shuhei Iida, CEO



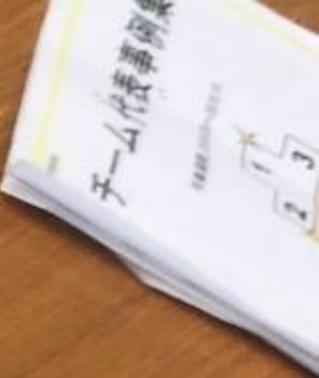
A middle-aged man with short, spiky grey hair is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark suit jacket, a light blue dress shirt, and a dark tie. He is speaking and has his hands clasped in front of him. Behind him is a large projection screen displaying a scene with a vase of flowers on a wooden cabinet. The scene on the screen includes a vase with pink, purple, and yellow flowers, a wooden cabinet, and a light-colored wall. The overall lighting is warm and slightly dim, typical of an indoor presentation or meeting.

To avoid going out of business,
it is not enough to maintain the status quo.

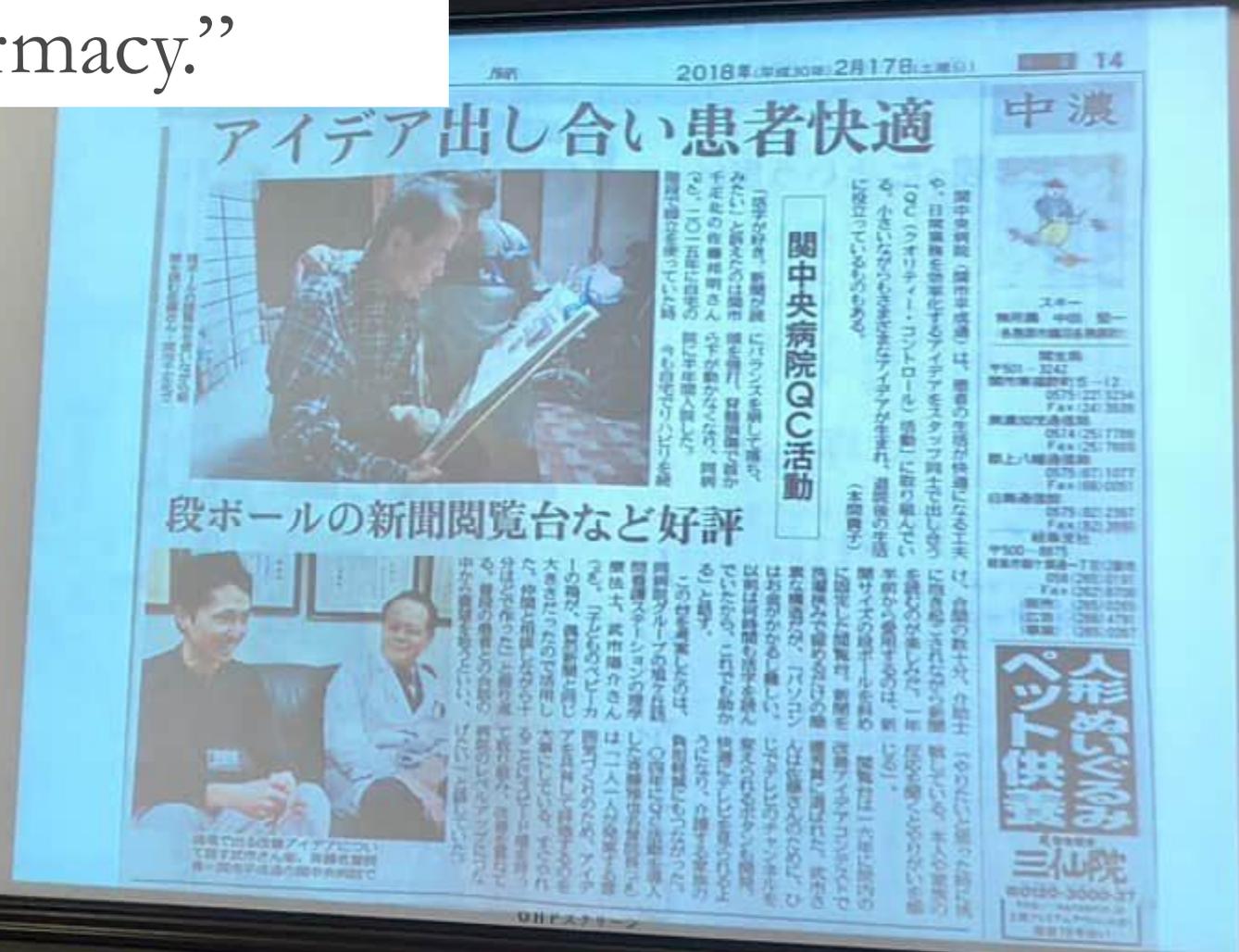
“Improvement
must be like
brushing your
teeth. It's not
something
special. It's
something we do
because it's
necessary.”



“We were not always
a Kaizen company.”

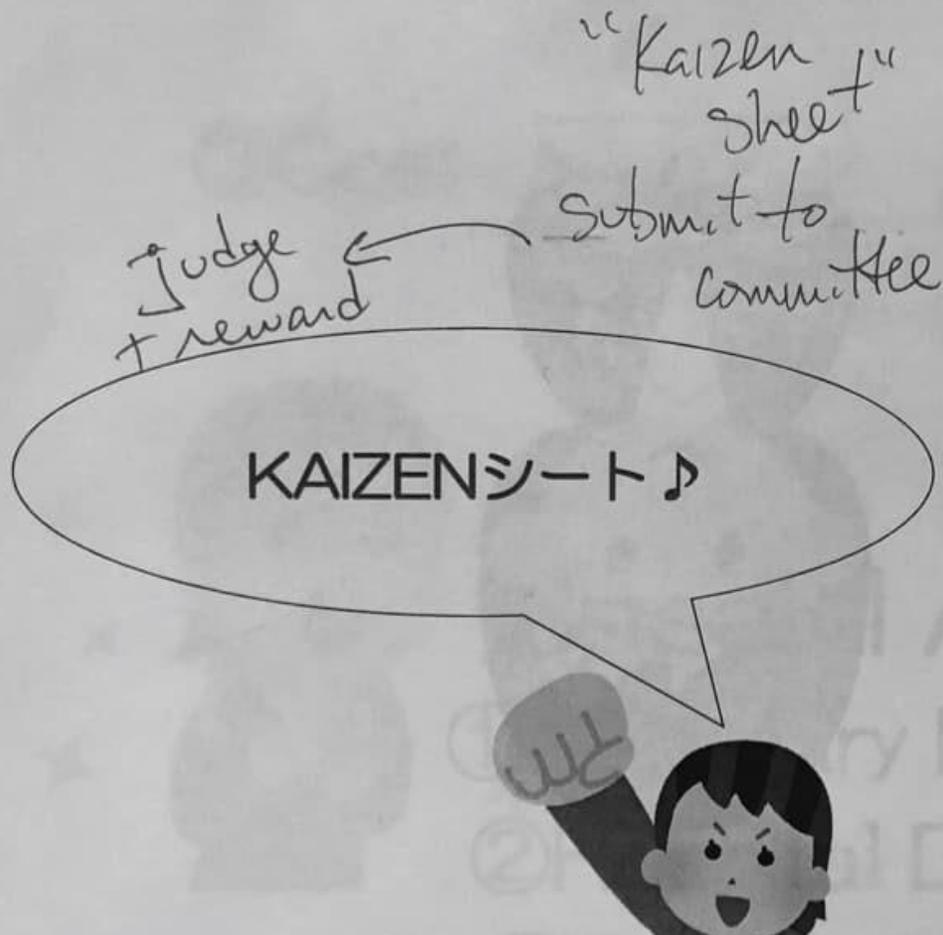


“We were like a mouse running all around the pharmacy.”



“We practice TQM” — Pharmacist

【Write・Submit・Share】



KAIZENシート

日付

部署名

氏名

*該当するカテゴリーにひとつの○をつけてください

①患者様中心	②5S	③経費削減	④業務改善	⑤その他

THEME
テーマ :

■今までの様子

■こんな問題がありました

CURRENT

FUTURE

■こんなに良くなりました！

RESULT

100字以内

3分以内で記入する

小さなことでも変えてみよう！

まずはやってみよう！

自分の仕事と職場の改善しよう！

確認印

--	--	--	--	--

“The QC story takes a long time... Kaizen is faster.”

Seki Chuo Hospital Group

Small Kaizen Contest

“To improve / change the
current way of working.”

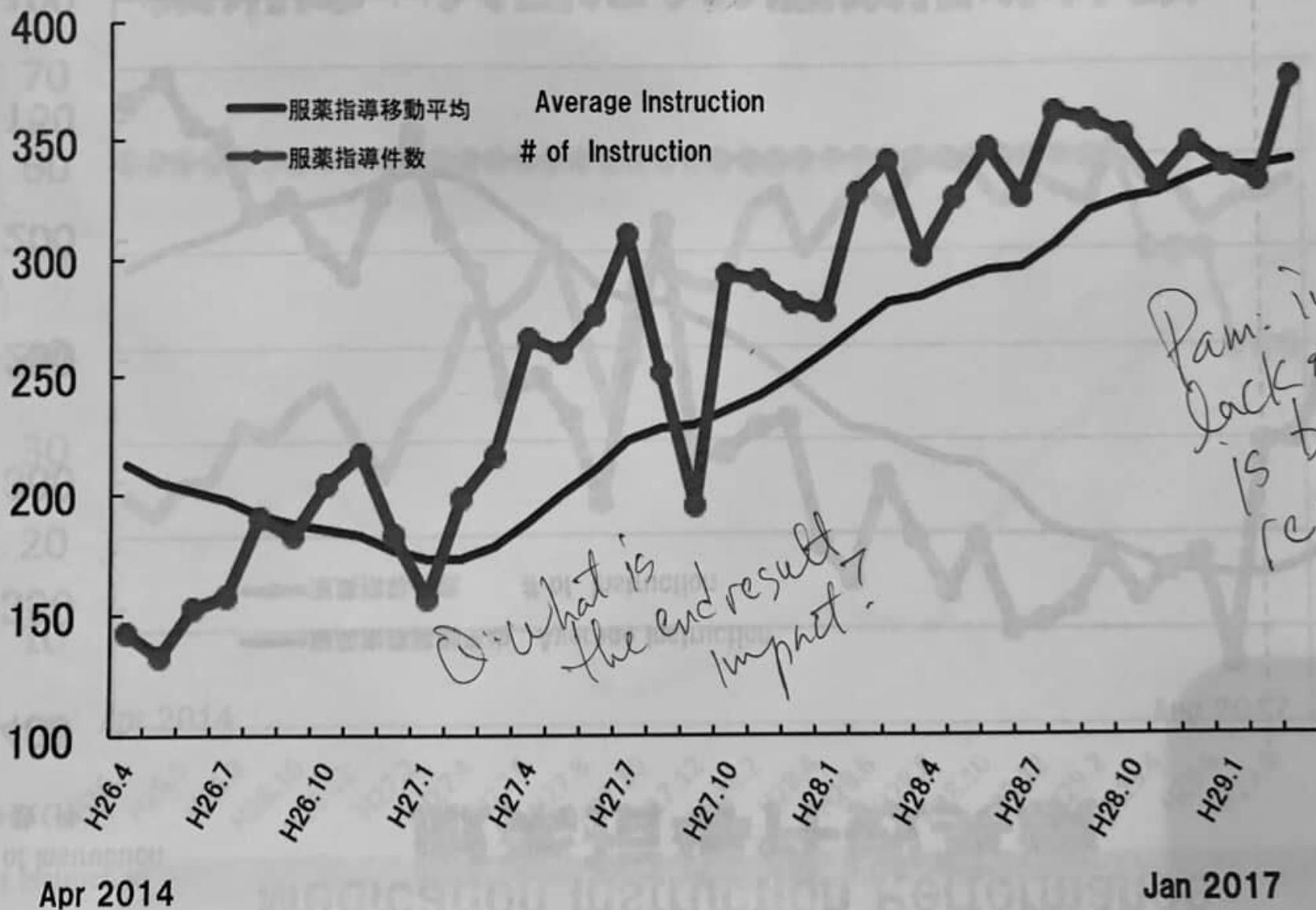
Kaizen Promotion Committee
Kaizen Sectional Meeting



Medication Instruction Performance

服薬指導件数実績

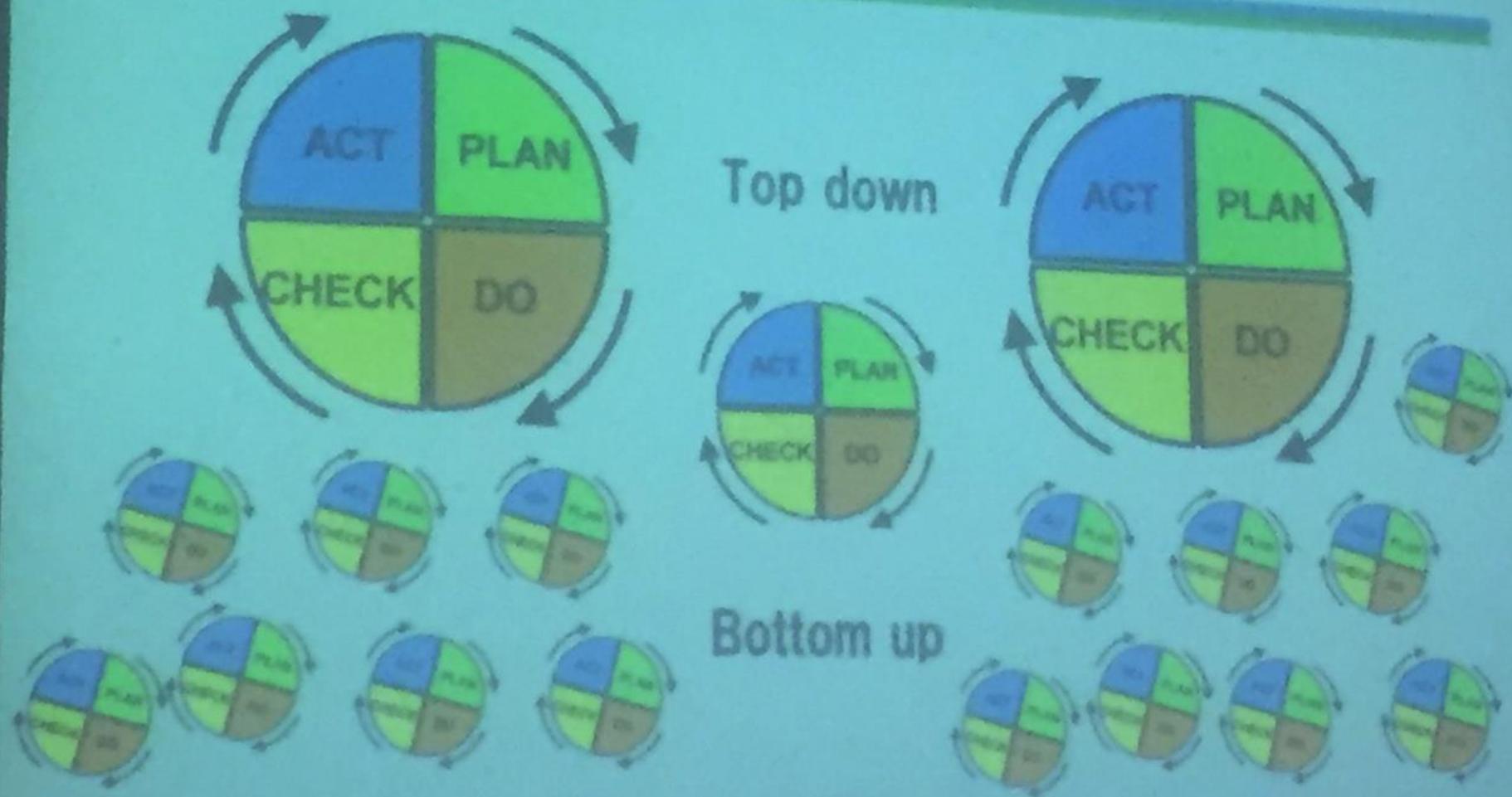
of Instruction
件数(件)



Q: What is the end result impact?

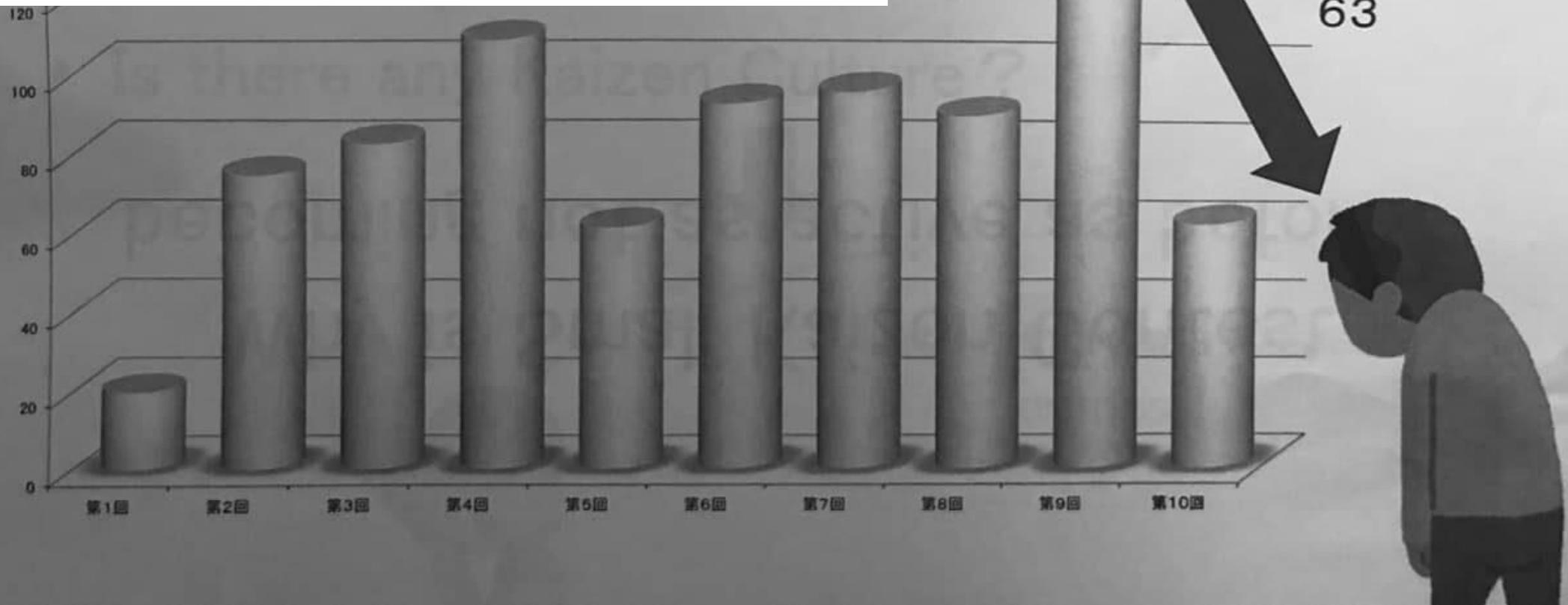
Pain in U.S. is lack of med inf is big cause of readmission

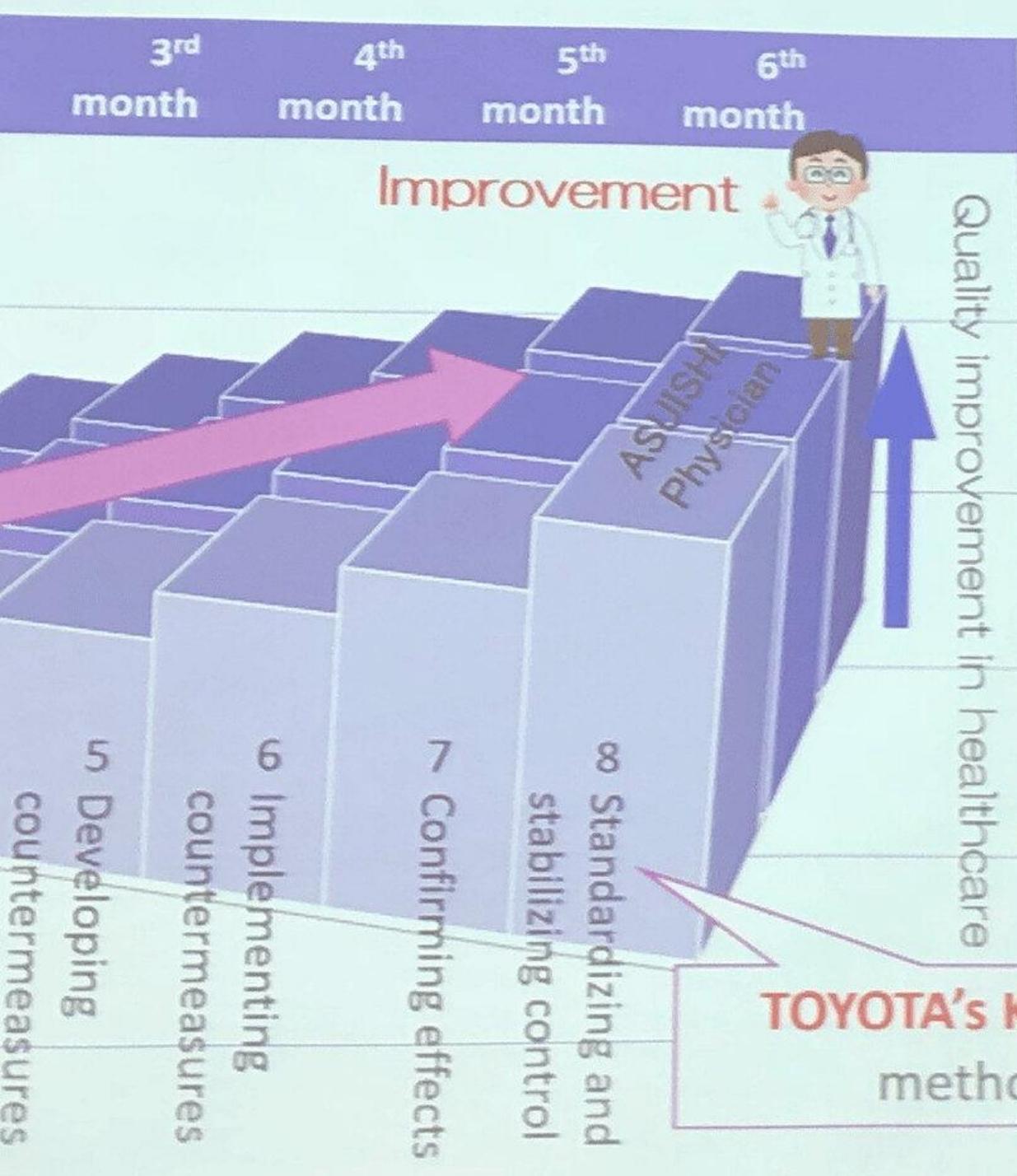
Kaizen Culture (Continual Quality Improvement)



of Small Kaizen Activity Submitted

“Why might this be happening?”





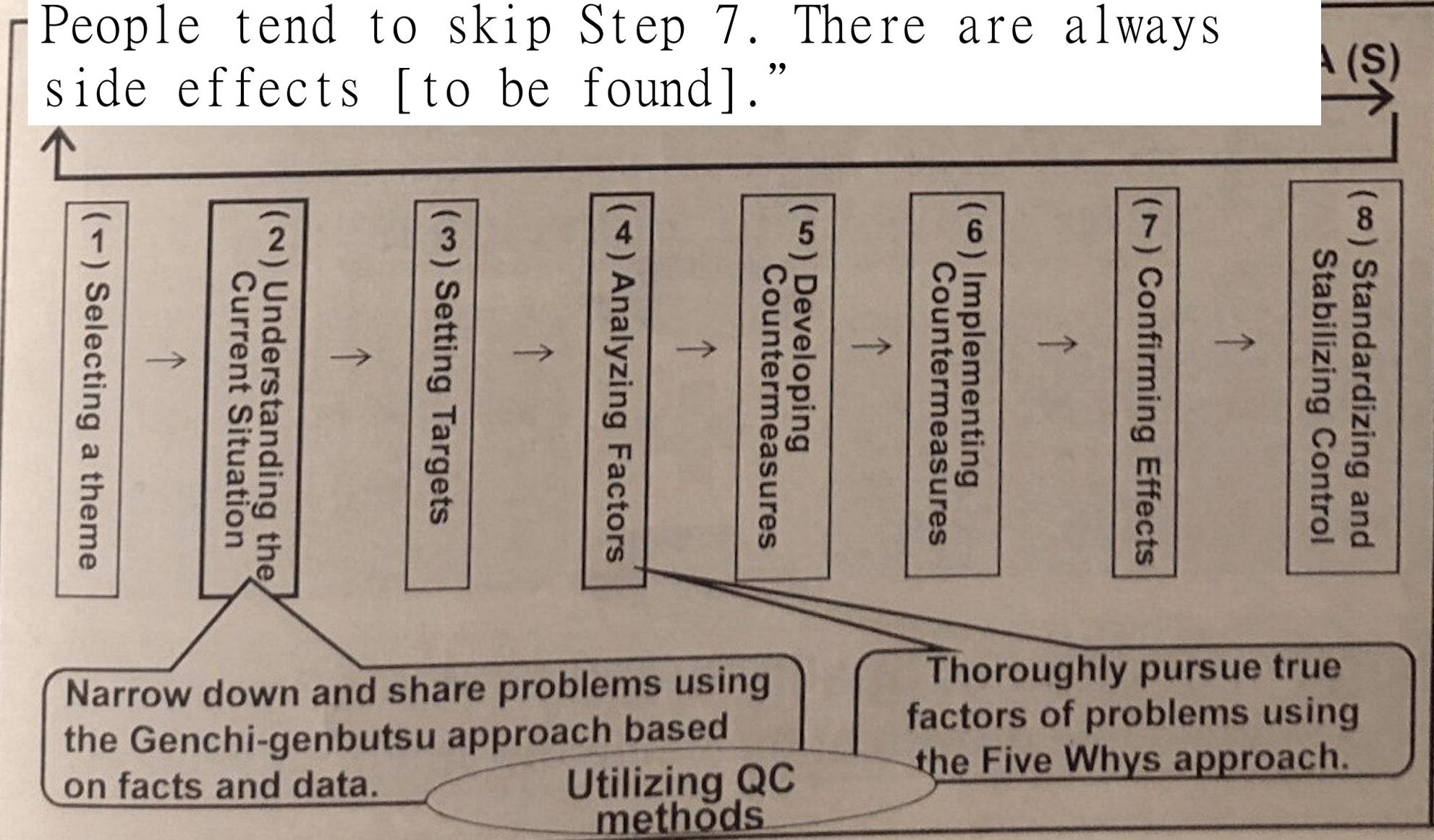
“We want to solve the problem when it's small.”

“I didn't have enough confidence that the 8-step method would be useful to doctors. The doing is easier than thinking about it.”



Problem Solving ~The Basis of Everything Else~

“If you skip any step this will not work. People tend to skip Step 7. There are always side effects [to be found].”



High-Level Process at Hospital

1. What is the current situation?
2. What are the reasons behind these problems?
3. Where are some possible solutions?
4. Try out the solutions
5. Check - were the solutions effective? What were the results?
6. If things improved, then standardize and prevent backsliding

Step 1 Select a theme!

- List up problems, evaluate and choose one as a theme.

No.	Other problems you may have. It can be anything!	Rank
1	Please fix the drain always blocked.	A B C
2	Food presentation is boring.	A B C
3	Consider time to complete cooking for better presentation.	A B C
4	Want a cue from a cook.	A B C
5	Don't accumulate dirty dishes.	A B C

Rank B On

I	U	E	Score
O	△	O	13
△	△	△	9

“Lessons learned are the most important item.” (Step 9)

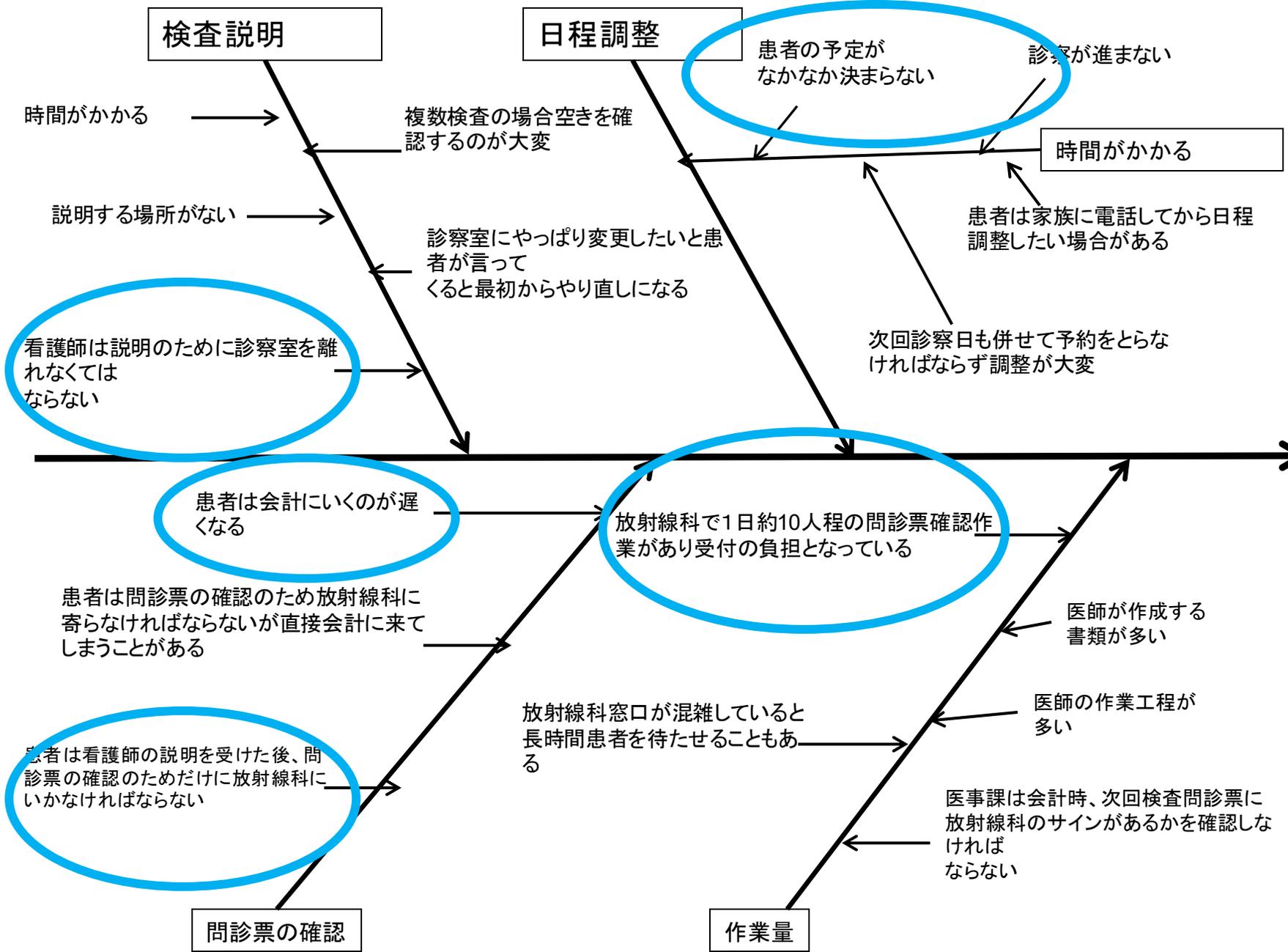
“Improvement has become the culture of the workplace...
Kaizen is endless.”

Theme for Everybody

Let's be creative about food presentation!



原因追求



検査予約が各職種、患者に負担

“Making exam reservations is a burden for staff and patients.”

KAIZEN



- “We are always trying Kaizen.”
- “Kaizen is autonomous and voluntary.”
- “Ideally, there would be no Lean or Kaizen program... We'd just do it naturally.”
- “It’s difficult to do Kaizen when it feels forced.”
- “Make work as easy as possible.”
- “Limited space, so we have to be creative.”
- “Many hospitals have tried Kaizen, but quit. It’s hard.”

How to Spread Kaizen?

“That’s a strange question. It’s a way of life. We don’t know how to disseminate it because we just do it.”

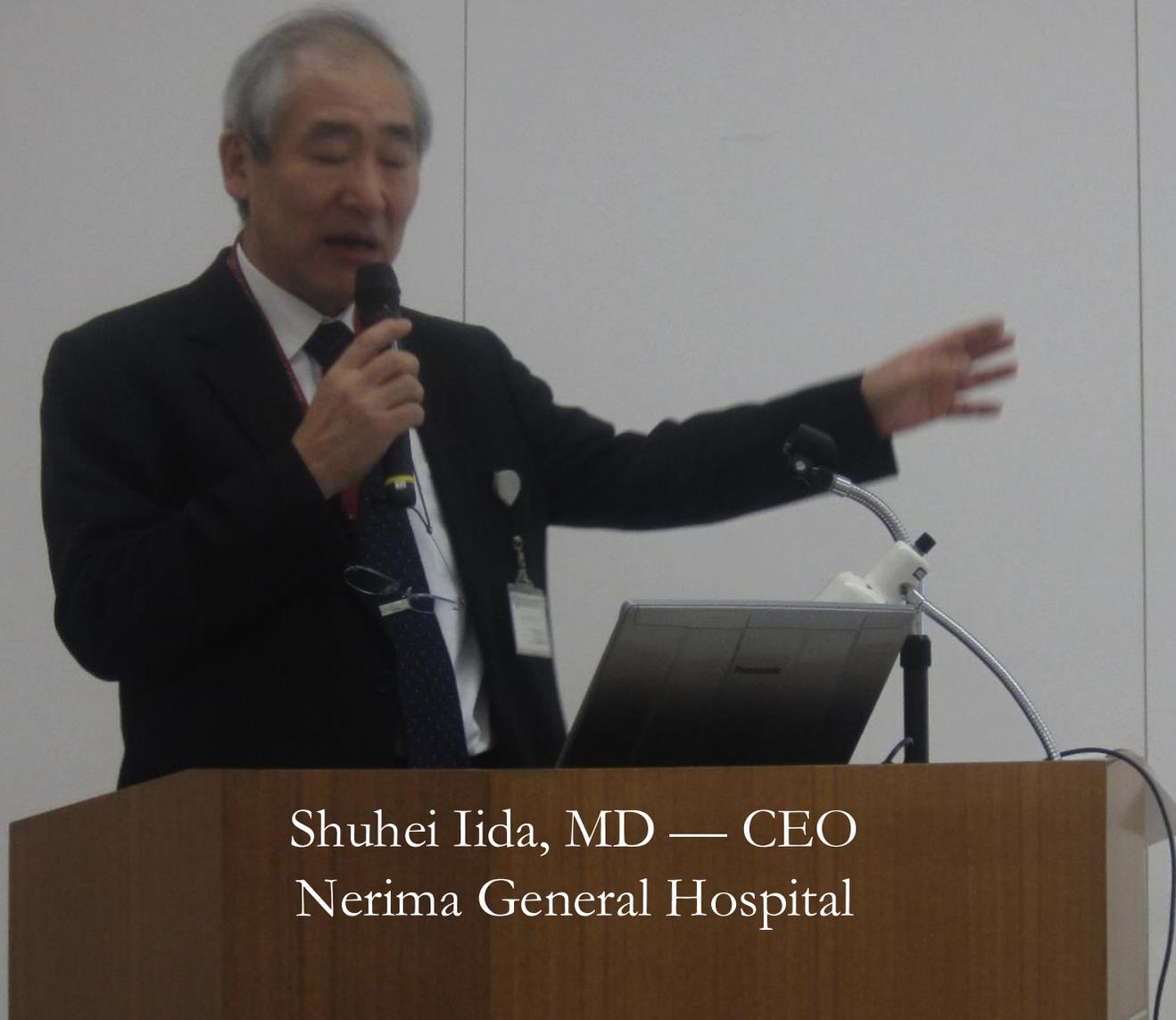


“Award-Winning” Kaizen

- Thought they had left an instrument in a patient
- It was on the floor, covered by linens
- Implemented a kanban system and checklist for tools
- Was implemented in 1-2 days
- “Kaizen can be done immediately.”



“If you keep doing Kaizen,
you will get innovation.”



Shuhe Iida, MD — CEO
Nerima General Hospital

“As you do
Kaizen, you
increase your
chance of
innovation, as
you stumble
into things.
As you keep
doing Kaizen,
you also look
for big jumps.”

Dr. Iida Comments

- Learned TQM from reading/studying/visiting outside of healthcare.
- TQM cannot be seen. Even if you visit hospitals and don't know if they have done TQM or not... it's harder to see what's happening in a hospital.
- We didn't have enough money to pay consultants, so we had to figure this out ourselves.

Dr. Iida on Responsibility

- “Patient participation is something we talk about. I don't like the term. We work for them. We have to be responsible.”
- Q: Should we ask patients to speak up about hand washing?
 - “Was surprised to see posters at Hopkins about washing hands. It's good to have reminders, but if you're responsible in your job, you wash your hands without being told.”

A Different Hospital

- “More smiles through hand hygiene”
- clean hands →
safer care →
happier patients & staff



“To cherish the small and daily challenges to grow – the accumulation of small things allows us to do great things.”



TQM = A Tool for Quality Creation Management

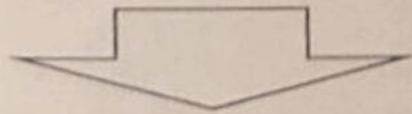
Achieving management goals \Rightarrow Realizing sustainable growth and vision

what mgmt has to do:

“Create new value that fulfills customers’ expectations.”

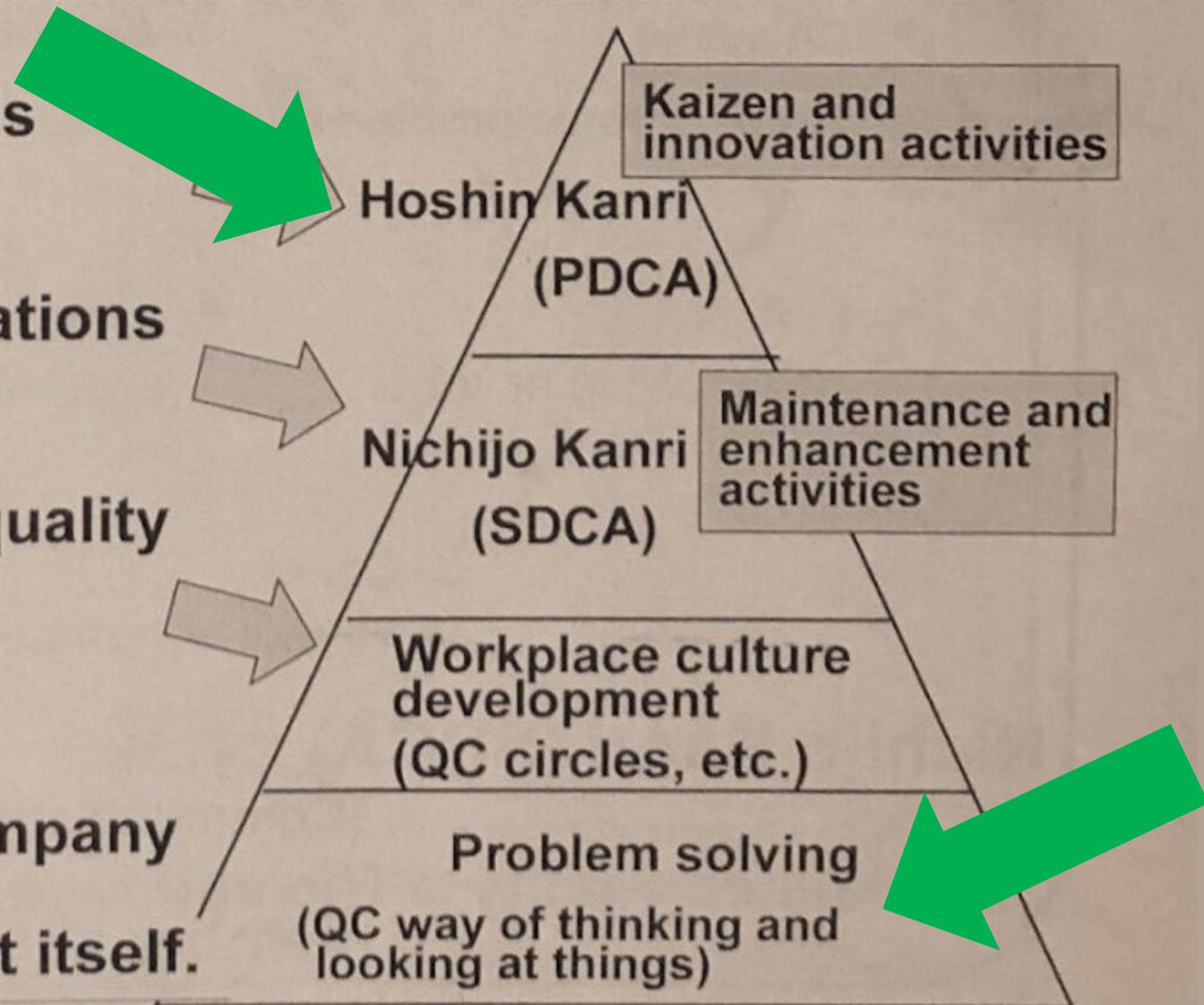
“Accurately respond to variations and changes.”

“Increase an awareness of quality issues in each employee.”



Sustainable growth of the company

Quality Control is management itself.



Kaizen and innovation activities

Hoshin Kanri
(PDCA)

Maintenance and enhancement activities

Nichijo Kanri
(SDCA)

Workplace culture development
(QC circles, etc.)

Problem solving
(QC way of thinking and looking at things)



We accept the changing environment, actively promote reform and realize an easy-to-work environment for a wide variety of people!

Policy Management under Corona Pandemic (Short-term)

2020 Company Policy

~ Maintain business even with 70% operations ~

- ◇ Sales Target **5.5 billion JPY** (2020 Estimated operations 70%)
- ◇ Profit Target **500 Million JPY** (Debt repayment. The contribution amount equal to the previous term)
- ◇ Cost Reduction Target **700 Million JPY** (Accumulation of small improvements that do not allow even for the lowest cost of 1 JPY to be paid for outsourcing)

A clean SSC factory that is cleaner than a food factory (Simple·Slim·Compact)

■ 「ZERO Accidents」 「2S + Shining」

- Zero accidents at work, **shiny activities** on floors and equipment · Display and

Identified Location · Placement rules



■ 「ZERO Defects, ZERO Screening」

- **Daily Management + P M + Q C activities**, G L · T L · S L, "ZERO ZERO presentation"

activities

■ Complete with 「Existing manpower」. (Zero overtime, paid holiday once a month)

- Activities to **improve the life of cutting tools** · **Multi-skilled workers** · **Part-time work**

■ 「100% Inhouse」

- Equipment automation, Used equipment, Jigs and Prototypes, **all can be done by**

internal resources. Human resource development that encourage Inhouse.



Sales dep. Norio Ikezaki

I have never been blamed when I fail to achieve the goals I set for myself.





改善 KAIZEN

Hoshin Kanri

Kamishibai

Obeya

Yokoten

“Why Do You Use Japanese Words?”



MINDSETS

1. Long-Term Thinking
2. Focus on People Development
3. Respectful Inquiry Over Directives
4. Improvement as Daily Discipline
5. Respect in Action at the Gemba
6. Systems that Enable, Not Punish
7. Adaptation Over Copying

Thank you very much for your kind
attention.



Q&A Time

- **Email:** Mark@MarkGraban.com
- **Links:** MarkGraban.com/Catalysis2025
- **Japan:** JapanLeanTrip.com

