

Daihatsu's Story

Pursuing, protecting, and advancing Daihatsu's unique qualities. Tackling immediate problems head-on. Providing high-quality products directly, in an attainable form. While returning to first principles, Daihatsu will reaffirm our belief in our unique qualities as we push forward.

The history of that endeavor begins at the various work sites in the Daihatsu organization. At the core of all Daihatsu's initiatives is the drive of every single each and every employee to build a better future with their own hands. In the following pages, we will draw on the words of frontline personnel to show where Daihatsu's unique qualities can be found in the present day.

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Creating a BEV That Supports Working People

Electrifying the Familiar Ease of Use of Commercial Mini Vehicles

N.E.

Assistant Manager,
Commercial Planning Group, Product Planning Division

My Desire to “Leave Clean Skies for the Next Generation Through Environmentally Friendly Vehicles”

After joining the company, my first project was material development for fuel cells. I conducted repeated evaluations and studies to identify materials that could be used safely and reliably over the long term in systems installed in mini vehicles. Although I was working in the small field of materials rather than the vehicle as a whole, this experience in environmental technology development connects to my current work on BEVs.

One reason I chose Daihatsu was my desire to “leave clean skies for the next generation through environmentally friendly vehicles.” My family home was located along a busy road, so air pollution was a concern from the time I was a child. Back then, I was not thinking so much about CO₂. I was more aware of whether we could

do something to reduce exhaust gases and airborne particulates, even a little. If electric vehicles become more widely available, perhaps we can aim for even higher environmental performance. That feeling is still a major starting point for me as I work on this BEV development project.

I later moved to a department involved in electric vehicle development, where I worked on benchmarking other companies’ vehicles and studying the layout of battery packs and drive units. I joined the commercial mini BEV development project from the product planning side, and was responsible for managing vehicle weight and studying specifications and equipment. Ease of use for customers and ease of production at the plant. The main purpose I fulfilled in my latest role was to refine the specifications while balancing both of these factors.

What Not to Change in the Switch to BEVs

What mattered most to us in developing the commercial mini BEV was preserving, as much as possible, the ease of use we had built up in our gasoline vehicles. With commercial mini vehicles, how much cargo they can carry really matters. So we made it a key policy not to lose cargo space, even as our vehicles became electrified.

At the same time, a BEV has to carry a large battery pack and drive unit. If we changed the brake size or tire size just because the vehicle became heavier, it would affect how easy it is to make tight turns. We had to stay within mini vehicle standards while preserving cargo space, maintaining ground clearance, and keeping the tire size unchanged. The team members involved found that fitting all the necessary components within those

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constraints was extremely difficult.

When it comes to driving performance, we deliberately avoided making it feel too much like an electric vehicle. At many workplaces, drivers may switch between gasoline and BEV vehicles. If the acceleration and deceleration feels different, it could take time to get used to going back and forth, causing an unnecessary burden. We wanted the vehicle's behavior to feel familiar, so drivers could switch between a gasoline vehicle and a BEV without discomfort. To me, that's what makes Daihatsu so unique—building a vehicle that truly supports people in their work.

Designing Around Real-World Use

In development, we also made a point of seeing how customers actually use their vehicles. We did not want to rely solely on assumptions made in the office. Instead, we worked to bring the vehicle as close as possible to how it would be used in practice, including by following delivery vehicles to observe how they accelerated, decelerated, and operated in real-world conditions. I believe those efforts helped us create a driving experience that feels natural and intuitive.

Making fast charging a standard feature also stemmed from careful consideration of how people actually use commercial vehicles. The basic assumption is that most users will charge overnight, but there are times when deliveries get delayed in traffic or vehicles need to stay on the road for extended periods during busy seasons. In situations like that, even a brief charging session can make a real difference. While this feature may not be necessary for customers using vehicles only for short-distance applications, we felt it was important to provide that extra peace of mind when it's needed.

The 100 V outlet was another feature we developed by thinking about the real challenges our customers face. For example, depending on how heavily air-conditioned clothing or power tools are used at a morning job site, there may not be enough battery remaining for the afternoon. In those situations, being able to recharge such devices while driving can be extremely helpful. We positioned the outlet within easy reach so users could notice it and plug in their devices before setting off.

A BEV is not just a means of transportation. It can also

serve as a mobile power source. By making electricity available both inside and outside the vehicle, it can support work sites, evacuation centers during disasters, and homes or facilities affected by power outages. Supporting the daily work of people while also providing help when it's needed most. That was the kind of vehicle we set out to create.

It Takes a Team to Build a Car

Turning a vehicle into a BEV changes the parts and systems it requires. In a gasoline vehicle, waste heat from the engine can be used for heating, but a BEV requires a separate heating system. There were also areas where systems used in conventional vehicles could not be simply carried over, requiring major control changes, new components, and extensive work to ensure quality. To make that happen, we relied not only on the design team, but also on colleagues in purchasing and quality assurance, as well as our suppliers.

Even after prototype vehicles are built, new challenges emerge. Because a BEV is heavier than its gasoline counterpart, the loads placed on many components increase as well. We had to consider how to ensure customers could use the vehicle with complete confidence. Members from design, evaluation, production engineering, plants, and many other functions all contributed their perspectives.

Performance alone is not enough. The vehicle also has to be something that can be built consistently, serviced efficiently, and delivered while maintaining quality targets. Finding the best solution within a limited space while satisfying all of those requirements is never easy. Whenever a challenge arose, people stepped up to help. Everyone spoke openly and shared their ideas without hesitation to come up with solutions. Through that experience, I came to appreciate that no single department can build a vehicle on its own. In addition to our in-house teams in design, evaluation, production engineering, plants, and purchasing, we received tremendous support from Toyota and Suzuki Motor Corporation, who jointly developed the EV system with us, as well as from our suppliers. I truly feel this is a vehicle that would not have been possible without the efforts of so many people working together.

Continuing to Rethink Usability from the Customer's Perspective

We hope this vehicle will find a place not only in delivery operations, but also with construction companies, local governments, and sole proprietors. For early morning and nighttime deliveries, the quietness of a BEV helps reduce disturbance to surrounding communities. At construction sites, it can also be used to charge power tools and air-conditioned workwear. Local governments can use it as an official vehicle during normal operations and as a power source during emergencies.

In this way, every customer uses their vehicle differently. That is why I believe development should focus not only on what a BEV can do, but also on how customers will actually use it in their daily work and lives. I learned that by observing how vehicles are actually used and carefully considering each function and driving characteristic, we can arrive at solutions that genuinely meet customers' needs. Going forward, we hope to learn from our customers' experiences and use that feedback to make the vehicle even better.

Throughout this project, there were many times when I was guided and supported by my supervisors and colleagues. Going forward, I hope to become someone who can lead others in the same way and apply the experience I gained here not only to commercial vehicles, but also to developing vehicles that serve an even wider range of customers. I hope to continue taking on the challenge of building vehicles that support people in their everyday lives and work.



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Bringing a Commercial Mini BEV Into Mass Production

Leveraging Our Existing Production Line While Tackling a New Vehicle Architecture Through Frontline Ingenuity

K.T.

Assistance Foreman,
Production Engineering Paint &
Assembly Department,
Production Engineering Division,
Daihatsu Motor Kyushu Co., Ltd.
(left)

O.H.

Production Engineering Paint &
Assembly Department,
Production Engineering Division,
Daihatsu Motor Kyushu Co., Ltd.
(right)



Applying Our Commercial Vehicle Manufacturing Experience to BEV Production Preparation

O.H. I have been involved in production preparation for commercial vehicles, including the Hijet, which serves as the base vehicle for this model. I have also worked on special-purpose vehicles and overseas models, so I have often had to figure out how to manufacture vehicles with structures and production processes that differ from standard models on an existing production line.

For this commercial mini BEV, I worked on the production engineering side to ensure the vehicle design incorporated everything needed for mass production at the plant. Although it is based on the Hijet Cargo, converting it to a BEV dramatically changes the underbody structure and adds a battery, motor, and other dedicated components. Our first major challenge was figuring out how to manufacture that vehicle on our existing production line.

K.T. I started out on the assembly line before moving into

production preparation and process improvement. For this commercial mini BEV, I was involved from a manufacturing perspective during development, and later from a production engineering perspective as we prepared for mass production.

I had felt for some time that I needed to deepen my understanding of BEVs. I also took part in a demonstration project where we manufactured vehicles almost entirely by hand. Getting my hands on the vehicle and working through each challenge, even when I did not yet have all the answers, became valuable experience that has carried over into this project.

Having worked on the assembly floor, I was always thinking beyond the drawings. Even if something looked fine on paper, I wanted to know whether operators could actually assemble it, and whether they could keep doing so comfortably within the production takt time. So for this project, my focus was not simply on whether the parts could be assembled, but on whether the vehicle could be built consistently on the existing production line.

Making the Most of Our Existing Equipment

O.H. Just because the vehicle has a new structure does not mean we can immediately introduce new equipment. Floor space is limited, and there are also investment and ongoing maintenance costs to consider. That is especially true for low-volume production vehicles, where making the best use of existing equipment is essential.

We have extensive experience manufacturing special-purpose vehicles by adding a wide range of equipment to our standard models. Our approach has always been to build as much as possible using the same process as the standard vehicle, while assembling dedicated parts or major structural differences in a special-purpose vehicle area. We took the same approach here. Just because it is a BEV does not mean everything has to be treated differently. Anything that could be shared with the standard model stayed on the same process. The real question was how to accommodate only the

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areas that were different. That was what we spent our time working through.

Take the newly designed rear suspension, for example. During vehicle assembly, it has to be installed together with the motor, making the structure quite different from anything we had dealt with before. Our existing lifter could not handle it, and we even considered adding new equipment. But after discussing ideas as a team, we came up with a two-stage configuration that allows us to install it within the existing process. We also redesigned the fixture that holds the ESU, the electric vehicle control unit, so it could run through the same production line as our engine-powered vehicles. That solution came from asking ourselves how these new components could fit into the line we already had.

Each improvement may seem small on its own, but by building on them one after another, we were able to produce the BEV without significantly disrupting the flow of the standard production line. To me, making the most of an existing production line is not simply about avoiding new equipment. It is about creating a manufacturing environment that can adapt flexibly to change.

K.T. I also think our ability to move quickly was a major advantage during this launch. At Daihatsu Motor Kyushu, when an issue came up, people from different departments were close enough that we could talk to each other right away. It was easy to say, “Could we borrow this for a bit?” or “Could you give us a hand here?” Of course, that also meant we had to think through the solutions ourselves. We tried an idea first, and if it did not work, we improved it. This cycle was how we pushed the project forward.

Learning by Doing, Then Making It Work on the Production Floor

K.T. Many of the structures we dealt with were completely new to us. To figure out how to assemble the rear suspension, we started by studying vehicles with similar layouts, taking

them apart, and rebuilding them ourselves. We also obtained the certifications required to handle batteries and made sure we had insulated gloves and safety shoes. We studied unfamiliar structures, determined what we needed, and if something did not exist, we made it ourselves. It was a very hands-on beginning, and while it was certainly challenging, I honestly enjoyed it.

One thing I always keep in mind is whether what we create is genuinely easy for people to use. If it is difficult to use, people will eventually stop using it. We watched how operators worked, looked for anything that made their jobs harder, and improved things little by little.

When it came to installing the battery, we wanted to avoid introducing large-scale equipment. Instead of building a lifting device to raise the battery, we came up with a method of lowering the vehicle onto the battery during assembly. The difficult part was making sure the mounting holes on the vehicle and the battery lined up perfectly. We first considered using lasers or locating pins, but found that the process became awkward if it wasn't level and ended up tilted. In the end, we solved it with a much simpler approach by lowering chains through the holes in the vehicle body and feeding them through the corresponding holes in the battery. Finding an effective solution with a simple mechanism instead of relying on large-scale equipment was one of the key innovations in this project.

Finding Solutions Together with Other Departments and Suppliers

O.H. Once we actually started running the vehicles down the production line, unexpected issues naturally came up. We even encountered errors we had never seen before, and there were times when we spent days trying to understand what was happening. After the production line stopped for the day, everyone involved would gather together, run the vehicle through again, recreate the issue, observe its behavior, and work through the possible causes one by one.

What I really appreciated was that no one ever said, “That’s a design problem,” or “That’s a production line problem.” No matter what the issue was, people from manufacturing, inspection, quality assurance, and design all came together to help. Even when the issue originated in the design, we worked together to figure out how manufacturing could make it work. I think that collaborative way of working

made a tremendous difference.

K.T. This project also gave us the chance to work not only with manufacturing, production engineering, and design, but also with the evaluation, durability testing, procurement teams, and our business partners. We saw firsthand just how much preparation our business partners put into delivering parts with consistently high quality. It really drove home how many people work incredibly hard to bring a single vehicle to market.

Understanding how our suppliers manufacture their parts is just as important. Rather than asking for things based on our own needs, we need to understand their production processes and the challenges they face in making those parts. Without that understanding, it is difficult to arrive at improvements that are practical and realistic.

The Toughest Challenges Lead to Better Manufacturing

O.H. One thing this project taught me is that even when you do not know the answer, if you keep learning, keep trying, and accept a few failures along the way, you eventually become capable of things you could not do before. None of us knows exactly how the future will unfold, whether it will be electrification or some other type of fuel. Even so, I want to be the kind of engineer who never stops asking, “How can we make this happen?”

K.T. I also hope younger engineers will not give up when they run into difficulties, but instead enjoy the challenge of working through them. As for me, I want to keep taking on new challenges as well. Whether it is digital transformation, machining, processing, or welding, if I believe a technique is worth trying, I want to explore it myself. I want to become someone people can say, “If we ask that person, we will find a way to make it work.”

O.H. We put so much effort into bringing this vehicle to life that nothing would make me happier than seeing many people use it and feel that it is truly a good vehicle. In areas such as mountainous regions where gas stations may be far away, the ability to charge the vehicle at home could make everyday use much more convenient. It could also serve as a source of power during emergencies. I hope to carry everything we learned through this project into the next generation of vehicle development.

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Delivering the Value of BEVs to Our Customers' Work

Working Hand-in-Hand with Dealerships to Promote Electric Vehicles Built for Work

T.Y.

General Manager,
Sales Planning Department,
Domestic Sales Planning Division
(left)

M.T.

Assistant Coordinator,
Sales Planning Department,
Domestic Sales Planning Division
(right)



Creating the Confidence to Recommend a New Kind of Vehicle

T.Y. Over the years, I have worked in a variety of roles, including overseas sales, product planning, and domestic sales planning. Now, I am responsible for preparing the launch of new vehicle models, including our commercial mini BEVs. Preparing to launch a commercial mini BEV was very different from preparing to launch a conventional gasoline-powered vehicle. We need to propose not only the vehicle itself, but also charging infrastructure, government subsidies, and ongoing operating costs. A major part of our role was putting the necessary information and support systems in place so sales company staff could confidently explain these vehicles to customers.

M.T. My experience includes improving systems for sales company activities, planning used-car sales initiatives, and working on assignment at sales

companies. During these assignments, I sold vehicles directly to customers as a member of the sales team in addition to heading various headquarters functions. For this commercial mini BEV project, I have been responsible for sales company training programs, rollout policies, and sales campaign planning.

Having worked as a salesperson myself, I am always conscious of the realities of customer-facing sales situations. Even when designing training sessions and role-playing exercises, I often find myself asking, "Will real customer conversations really go this smoothly?" and "Is this something sales staff can explain naturally and comfortably?" A polished explanation alone is not enough for the sales floor. What matters is whether the sales staff who interact with customers every day can genuinely talk about it with confidence and ease. Keeping that perspective in mind, we have worked through every step of the launch preparation process.

Many Customers Are Still Unsure Whether a BEV Is Right for Them

T.Y. Because commercial mini BEVs are work vehicles, our primary customers are companies and business owners who use them for work. While large corporations with a strong interest in carbon neutrality are an important target, we also hope to reach a wide range of small businesses and sole proprietors by leveraging the practical size of mini vehicles.

In particular, customers such as delivery operators, whose daily routes and driving distances are relatively predictable, can more easily plan charging schedules and visualize how a BEV would fit into their operations. That is why I believe it is important to tailor our proposals to each customer's actual operating conditions.

M.T. At the same time, many customers themselves are not yet sure whether a BEV is actually a good fit for their

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business. Delivery services are an easy example to picture, but for local electricians, construction companies, or sole proprietors, vehicle usage can vary tremendously. That is why it is so important not to make assumptions based solely on industry. Instead, we need to understand how each customer actually uses their vehicle and identify where a BEV can provide value in their day-to-day work.

For large corporate customers, contributing to carbon neutrality and demonstrating their environmental commitment can be a significant source of value. For sole proprietors, however, lower operating costs and quiet performance may feel much more relevant and tangible. When making deliveries in residential neighborhoods early in the morning or late at night, the quietness of a BEV can also help reduce disturbance to the surrounding community. Even with the same vehicle, the benefits that resonate most will differ from customer to customer. That is why we need to listen carefully to how customers use their vehicles and adjust which benefits we emphasize accordingly.

Making the Transition from Gasoline Vehicles Easy

M.T. One of the clearest selling points is that customers can switch from a gasoline vehicle without significantly changing the way they use the cargo area. Many sole proprietors customize their cargo space to suit their work, installing shelves, adding partitions, or making other modifications to improve usability. Because the commercial mini BEV maintains the same cargo area dimensions, such customizations can often be carried over with minimal changes. Being able to tell customers they can switch vehicles without dramatically changing how they work provides clear reassurance.

Of course, BEVs also raise concerns such as “Will the driving range be enough?” and “What happens if the battery runs out during the day?” If sales staff can only offer vague answers to those questions, customers cannot make decisions with confidence. That is why it is so important to carefully understand how far customers typically drive, what hours they operate, and where charging is available, so we can confidently explain whether a BEV will work for their specific needs.



T.Y. With gasoline vehicles, there were many cases where simply asking about daily driving distance was enough to make a recommendation. With a BEV, however, that alone is no longer enough. We need to understand much more, including when and where charging can take place, what kinds of cargo are being carried, and how frequently the vehicle is used. I believe this requires us to gain a much deeper understanding of how our customers actually work.

Giving Sales Staff the Confidence to Recommend BEVs

M.T. BEVs are a new product not only for customers, but also for our sales companies. They require knowledge that was never necessary with conventional gasoline vehicles, including electricity, charging equipment, government subsidies, and energy efficiency. Every salesperson naturally has vehicles they feel more comfortable selling and others they do not. If there are too many unknowns, it becomes difficult to discuss the vehicle with confidence. That is why it was so important to ensure that sales staff never felt they would rather not sell this vehicle.

Ahead of the launch, we prepared staff manuals and e-learning materials, and also conducted product training sessions. We also invited sales company staff to a test circuit where they could drive the vehicle themselves and experience its performance firsthand. Rather than relying solely on classroom instruction, we used role-playing exercises to help staff visualize how they would present the vehicle during actual customer consultations.

We gathered and organized the many questions that arose through these activities and compiled them into a Q&A resource that was shared with sales companies. We addressed each question individually and turned the

answers into practical tools for real sales situations. By continuing that steady process of communication and support, I feel we were able to gradually reduce many of the uncertainties people initially had.

T.Y. Alongside this launch, we are also rolling out a certification program called *EV Specialist*. The program certifies staff who have acquired BEV-specific knowledge, including energy efficiency, charger installation, and subsidy programs, and who meet a defined set of standards. Certified staff wear a dedicated badge so customers can easily find someone they can trust to answer their questions. Because this is a new type of vehicle, it is essential to create an environment where sales staff can present it with confidence and customers can seek advice with peace of mind.

Shaping an Approach to BEV Sales Through Frontline Feedback

M.T. Once the vehicle is launched, a wide range of feedback naturally begins to come in from actual sales discussions in the field. One of the most common concerns is the driving range. In many cases, the key to a successful conversation is understanding how the customer actually uses the vehicle and confidently saying, “For your needs, this vehicle should work just fine.”

This is also new territory for us, and there is no established playbook for BEV sales yet. That is why we want to gather feedback from the field, refine our FAQs and sales approaches, and work with our sales companies to develop a distinctly Daihatsu way of selling BEVs.

T.Y. One thing this initiative has reinforced for me is that proposing a BEV is not simply about explaining the vehicle itself. Electrification contributes to carbon neutrality, but it also requires customers to adapt certain aspects of how they use their vehicles. That is why I want to approach every aspect of my work with Daihatsu’s Mission firmly in mind: “Staying close to our customers and enriching their lives.”

M.T. Our role is to create an environment where the sales company staff feel confident enough to comfortably introduce the vehicle to customers. By listening to feedback from the field, we hope to bring the value of commercial mini BEVs to our customers.

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Supporting Operational Excellence Through DX

Creating Systems That Prevent Errors and Work for the Long Term

K.K.

Assistant Coordinator,
Digital Transformation Promotion Department,
Digital Transformation Promotion Division
(left)

T.Y.

Group Leader,
General Management Department,
Vehicle Performance Evaluation Division
(right)



Supporting My Colleagues Through Digital Technology with My Frontline Knowledge

K.K. I previously worked on a production line in one of our plants. Later, after participating in training offered by the DX Promotion Department, I became involved in DX initiatives. I have always enjoyed making computer programs, and I wanted to be involved in work that supports frontline operations through digital technology.

In the plant, people carry out their work every day while constantly thinking about the best possible way to do things and looking for even the smallest opportunities to eliminate waste. Even after moving to the DX Promotion Department, my firsthand understanding of those efforts has shaped how I approach my work. Rather than simply building systems, I focus on reducing frustration by using digital technology to support the people involved in vehicle manufacturing, making their jobs easier, and

enabling the kind of workplace they aspire to create.

To me, DX is about creating meaningful change through a series of small improvements. Something as simple as replacing paper with digital data can lead to further refinements, which in turn can grow into much larger transformations over time.

Eliminating Manual Data Entry by Connecting Data Directly

T.Y. I spent many years working in crash-safety development and was also involved in certification activities. As part of our efforts to prevent recurrences related to certification, I first reviewed past documents and reports. Later, I joined the DX Group within the Vehicle Performance Evaluation Division, where I became responsible for advancing the automation of certification testing.

One of the key goals of this initiative was to eliminate transcription errors in the documents used for certification. At testing sites, results are often recorded on paper and then manually entered into reports. As long as people are involved in those processes, completely eliminating transcription errors is not easy. That is why we needed to create systems that make such mistakes far less likely to occur in the first place.

K.K. Automating certification testing is about much more than improving efficiency. The goal is to redesign workflows to minimize error-prone manual processes, such as recording measurement results or transferring information between documents, thereby increasing the reliability of certification operations.

To achieve this, we digitized those processes and created systems that automatically collect measurement data from instruments and Excel files, generate test reports, and retain a complete history of the information.

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In practice, however, the work was far from straightforward. Different certification tests use different equipment and measuring instruments, and each one handles data differently. In many cases, extracting the data is not easy. Whenever we encountered such obstacles, we worked closely with experienced employees at the worksite, carefully examined the situation, and patiently sought practical solutions.

Building a System Is Only the Beginning

T.Y. At the same time, simply creating a system is not enough to prevent recurrence. If the DX Promotion Department or the DX Group within the Vehicle Performance Evaluation Division becomes responsible for building everything, then frontline teams will be unable to make changes themselves when issues arise or testing requirements change. It is important that the people who actually conduct the tests can use these tools themselves and modify them when necessary.

At first, many people in the field saw these systems as something that the DX team would simply build for them. However, when we explained that they would also need to build and maintain parts of the system themselves, the idea was not immediately accepted. Given their limited time and technical skills, it was understandably difficult to suddenly ask them to take on that responsibility. I think that was a completely natural reaction.

That is why we focused first on gradually increasing the number of people who could create and maintain these systems themselves. After receiving training from the DX Promotion Department, members of the DX Group developed those skills themselves, and representatives from each testing site were then trained so the knowledge

could spread throughout the organization. Today, we have entered a phase of self-sufficiency, where frontline teams are creating and improving systems on their own. Rather than acting as the primary builders of every solution, the DX Group is gradually transitioning to a support role, helping frontline teams overcome challenges as they drive these efforts forward.

When the Front Line Begins Taking Ownership of the System

K.K. At first, I think the worksite members felt uncertain about the changes. However, as we continued providing training and building the necessary systems, we gradually began to see changes. These days, it is becoming increasingly common to see people from the field come to the DX Group in the Vehicle Performance Evaluation Division and ask questions such as, “We’d like to do something like this. How can we make it happen?”

Seeing more opportunities for frontline teams to work alongside DX members and treat these systems as their own gives me a real sense that DX is taking root and gaining momentum.

T.Y. Of course, there are still many challenges ahead. Different tests use different equipment and measuring instruments, so a solution that works in one area cannot always be applied directly to another. That is why we carefully consider the circumstances of each testing area and work to develop solutions that can be adopted smoothly in practice.

Members of the DX Group are assigned to individual testing teams and work closely with them as these initiatives move forward. We believe it is important that neither the front line nor the DX Group should carry the burden alone. Instead, the front line should take the lead, with the DX Group providing support where needed.

It Starts with the Decision to Change the Way We Work

K.K. Sometimes, DX can start to feel like the goal itself. But what I always remind myself is that DX should be driven by the problems we want to solve and the goals we want to achieve. Whether it is preventing recurrence, creating new value, solving frontline challenges, or



improving efficiency, there are many different objectives. What matters is never losing sight of those objectives and finding the most effective way to achieve them through DX.

Within the workplace, networks that allow people to seek advice casually through internal communities, remote meetings, and other channels are also expanding. We also hold consultation sessions and forums where examples of AI and DX applications are shared. It does not have to begin with a major initiative. Sometimes a simple thought, like “That looks interesting” or “This part of the job is difficult, and I’d like to improve it,” can lead to small improvements that eventually grow into major transformations. I believe DX spreads through organizations one small step at a time, starting with the everyday challenges people encounter in their work.

T.Y. The automation initiative we are currently pursuing is something we must see through as part of our efforts to prevent certification-related issues from ever happening again. We cannot allow the same problem to occur again. That is why we are fully committed to building systems that make mistakes far less likely. At the same time, there are many development tests beyond those related to certification. I believe the experience we have gained through building these systems and providing training can eventually be applied to many other tests and business processes as well. First, we must ensure that recurrence prevention is firmly in place. From there, I hope we can expand these efforts into broader improvements that contribute to even better vehicle development.

K.K. DX should not be carried out by a limited group of specialists alone. It is an effort that begins with a workplace’s own desire to improve and evolve. We are committed to supporting these efforts with everything we have.

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Protecting Everyday Life Through Safety and Health

Creating a Workplace Where People Arrive Healthy and Return Home Smiling

S.S.

Team Leader,
Safety and Health
Care Department
(left)

Y.M.

Team Leader,
Safety and Health
Care Department
(right)



Applying Frontline Experience to Safety Initiatives

Y.M. Since joining the company, I have spent many years working on the production floor at the Kyoto (Oyamazaki) Plant. Now, I work in the Safety Group of the Safety and Health Care Department, where I am responsible for initiatives aimed at eliminating workplace accidents and traffic-related incidents, including those that occur during commuting.

Throughout my time in manufacturing, I have worked with five key responsibilities in mind: safety, quality, cost, delivery, and talent development. Now, my focus is entirely on safety. When an accident occurs, I visit the site, assess the situation firsthand, and discuss with frontline personnel why it happened and how similar incidents can be prevented in the future. Having spent many years on the shop floor, there are often things I can recognize immediately about working conditions and whether

proposed countermeasures are realistic and practical.

Without safety and health, no work can truly succeed. Improving quality and efficiency is important, but those efforts must be built on a foundation where every employee can work safely and in good health.

S.S. I work on the Mental Support Team, where I am responsible for employee mental health initiatives. My primary responsibilities include planning and conducting mental health training, administering and analyzing stress checks, providing consultation services, and supporting employees taking leave or returning to work.

What inspired me to work in mental health support was my feeling that, as people enter the workforce, expectations placed upon them increase while the systems available for seeking support often become less visible. That is why I believe it is important to identify signs of difficulty before someone's condition worsens and help connect them with the support they need.

Preserving Lessons Learned and Practicing the Basics Without Exception

Y.M. There is something we must never forget when talking about safety at Daihatsu. In 2009, a series of serious accidents occurred over a short period of time, resulting in the loss of a precious life. It was a year in which something that should never have happened took place, and it fundamentally changed Daihatsu's approach to safety.

The rules and principles established at that time remain in place today. Rather than constantly introducing new measures, what matters most is ensuring those lessons are never forgotten and consistently carrying out the basic things that should always be done. We refer to this mindset as *the thorough execution of ordinary but essential practices*.

Looking back at the accidents that occurred in 2025, many may have been preventable if fundamental practices had been followed more consistently, including adherence

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to procedures, hazard awareness, and safety checks. That is why it is so important to follow established procedures, pause before taking action, and check one’s surroundings. Consistently carrying out each of these actions is critical.

For example, holding the handrail when using stairs or keeping to the right when walking. Even these basic rules are taken seriously at Daihatsu. Even if you believe nothing will happen to you, a fall can affect the people around you as well. We must continue reminding people that safety is built on the accumulation of small, everyday actions.

Using Data to Prevent Problems Before They Occur and Improve the Workplace

S.S. The same principle applies to health. Early awareness is essential. In 2025, the number of employees taking leave due to newly emerging mental health issues increased, reinforcing the importance of identifying concerns early and connecting people with the support they need. At the same time, leave taken due to recurring mental health issues remained within our target range, giving us confidence that our support efforts aimed at preventing recurrence are having a positive impact.

Analysis of stress-check results shows that employees identified as experiencing high levels of stress are more likely to take leave than those who are not. That is why it is important not to stop at conducting stress checks, but to proactively engage with workplaces where risks are identified and use those findings to drive workplace improvements.

To support this effort, we have expanded our post-stress-check follow-up training and increased opportunities for employees and managers to learn about self-care and line care. We want employees to be able to recognize changes in their own condition, while also helping supervisors and colleagues notice signs of change and reach out early. Strengthening both of these capabilities is an important goal for us.

Y.M. The same is true when it comes to safety. We analyze trends in workplace accidents and traffic incidents, then focus our awareness campaigns and safety-monitoring activities on situations where risk is highest. In traffic safety, we also focus on high-risk situations such as commuting hours and busy parking lots in the morning.

For both safety and health, it is not enough to simply look at the outcomes. What matters is understanding how to improve the behaviors and environments that exist before problems occur. The key is to identify early warning signs and potential risks before they develop into larger problems. I believe that consistently taking those preventive actions is what ultimately reduces accidents and health-related issues.

Creating a Workplace Where Everyone Takes Ownership

S.S. One of the biggest challenges in mental health initiatives is helping people see the issue as something that concerns them personally. We can provide specialized knowledge through training, but it is not easy to get people to apply that knowledge to themselves or their own workplace and turn it into action.

In the past, the Safety and Health Care Department and Health Center primarily led these efforts by providing training and support. However, we cannot support every workplace on our own. Going forward, it is important that each workplace identifies its own challenges and takes the initiative to create an environment where people can work with energy and engagement.

In 2025, we revised our approach to post-stress-check workplace improvement activities, placing greater responsibility on each workplace to develop and implement its own improvement plans. We plan to continue sharing successful examples and finding practical ways to make these initiatives easier for each workplace to put into practice.

Y.M. The same is true for safety activities. They cannot be driven solely by the Safety and Health Care Department. Every individual in the workplace must take personal responsibility and act accordingly. We promote safety awareness through a variety of opportunities, including sharing lessons from serious accidents, distributing incident information across departments, issuing safety reminders through computer pop-ups, and providing safety education for mid-career hires.

For employees who are newly joining Daihatsu, it is especially important to explain why safety rules are valued so highly here. We believe that understanding the experiences and lessons behind those rules, rather than simply memorizing them, is the first step toward making safety a personal responsibility.

Creating a Workplace Where People Notice and Support One Another

S.S. In reality, many people find it difficult to ask for help. Some wonder, “Is this really something I should ask about?” Others worry, “Will asking for help affect how I am evaluated?” A few ponder, “People expect a lot from me, so I have to keep pushing myself.” As a result, they often endure too much on their own.

That is why not only self-care, but also line care, where supervisors and colleagues notice changes in those around them, is so important. It is important to build relationships through everyday communication so that people feel comfortable speaking openly when they are struggling. Both those seeking support and those providing it need to learn how to communicate effectively, how to speak up, and how to listen.

Y.M. Even when I worked on the front line, I always valued creating an environment where everyone could work comfortably. Sometimes you can tell something is different simply by looking at someone’s expression in the morning or listening to the way they talk. Even when people do not realize they are pushing themselves too hard, those around them may notice subtle changes. Noticing those small changes and reaching out can sometimes be the first step toward preventing an injury or health issue.

S.S. Stress is not always a bad thing. When managed well, it can even contribute to personal growth. We want people to manage stress effectively, stay aware of their own condition, and feel comfortable seeking help early when they need it. Our goal is to create a workplace where those behaviors come naturally.

Y.M. The role of the Safety and Health Care Department is to help create a workplace where everyone at Daihatsu can work more safely, stay healthy, and perform at their full potential. We want people to arrive at work healthy and return home with a smile. To protect that simple but important part of everyday life, we will continue working together with people across the company and steadily building on these efforts, one step at a time.

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Bringing Knowledge Home and Strengthening Intellectual Property Activities at Perodua¹

Aspiring to Be a Bridge Between Daihatsu and Perodua

A.S.

Intellectual Property Department, R&D Management Division

1. Perodua Manufacturing Sdn. Bhd. (PMSB)

Being the Only One Pushes Me to Give It All I've Got

I was seconded to Daihatsu Motor Co., Ltd. in March 2026 from Perodua, in Malaysia. As an overseas member of the Daihatsu Group, Perodua is responsible for vehicle development and manufacturing. When I learned that I would be working in Japan, I felt both honored and deeply grateful. Daihatsu's Intellectual Property Division possesses extensive expertise in patents and designs. Having the opportunity to learn through hands-on experience in that environment is incredibly valuable to me.

Because I am the only employee seconded from Perodua and the first ICT member to join the Intellectual Property Department in this way, there were times I wondered whether I was really the right person for the role. Even so, I now see it positively. Being the only one motivates me to work harder than ever.

I joined Perodua in 2022. At first, I was involved in training for CATIA², the 3D CAD software used in vehicle design, and was responsible for creating manuals and training new employees. Then, in 2023, a new Intellectual Property Group was established, and I transferred into the team. At the time, I had very little knowledge or experience in intellectual property. This assignment has become a tremendous opportunity for me to learn the fundamentals of intellectual property, both in theory and in practice.

2. CATIA: A 3D CAD software platform used for product design, including automotive development (developed by France's Dassault Systèmes)

Discovering the Broad Scope of Intellectual Property Work

At Perodua, my work had primarily focused on filing and maintaining design registrations. At the same time, Perodua also had its own research and development

capabilities. As local development activities continue to expand, it will become increasingly important to identify inventions created through that work and protect them appropriately. That is why one of my main goals during this assignment is to deepen my understanding of patents.

One thing that has particularly impressed me at Daihatsu is how early intellectual property activities become involved in the development process. Before coming here, I tended to think of intellectual property primarily as work related to filing applications. At Daihatsu, however, the IP team works closely with the Engineering Division to identify the key elements of an invention and confirm that the technology does not infringe on third-party patents, helping support development from an early stage. I have come to realize that intellectual property is not simply about filing applications. It is about becoming involved early enough to help development move forward with confidence.

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Working Closely with Engineers to Discover Inventions Hidden Within Development

At Daihatsu, the Intellectual Property Division and Engineering Division work in close communication from the early stages of development as part of the patent process. One of the most important things I am learning here is that intellectual property work does not happen in isolation. It involves working directly with engineers and viewing the technologies being developed through an IP lens.

For example, during kickoff meetings with the Engineering Division, we first introduce ourselves and discuss the types of development work underway, as well as how the team plans to approach patent applications during the fiscal year. There may be patent filing targets, but simply setting a target does not automatically generate inventions. It is necessary to have ongoing discussions with engineers to identify where the truly inventive elements lie.

Through patent review meetings and other discussions, we continue learning about the technologies engineers are developing and explore what kinds of inventions may be suitable for protection. Rather than simply imposing numerical targets, the goal is to encourage engineers themselves to think about what inventions may emerge from their own development work. The role of the Intellectual Property Division is to support that process. That is exactly the approach I am learning now.

At Perodua, there have been situations where patent-related matters were handled primarily by Daihatsu. As local development activities continue to expand, it will become increasingly important for Perodua to incorporate

intellectual property considerations into its own project activities. One of my goals when I return to Perodua is to apply what I have learned about collaborating with the Engineering Division, strengthen communication between the intellectual property and engineering teams there, and create an environment where Perodua engineers can proactively propose and contribute new inventions within their development projects.

Building Patent Search Experience to Support Development Projects

Right now, the area I am focusing on most is patent searching and analysis. Whenever a new technology emerges, patent research is essential for determining whether it may be patentable and whether it could potentially infringe on the rights of others.

If patent-related issues are discovered after development has progressed significantly, they can have a major impact on commercialization. That is why Daihatsu conducts IP reviews at key project milestones to determine whether development can continue without any issues. I have come to understand that these reviews are not intended to slow development down, but rather to help it move forward with confidence.

When conducting a search, we create search criteria using classifications and keywords based on technology brought to us by an engineer for consultation. The results can vary significantly depending on which classifications are included and which keywords are selected. After completing the search, we screen the results to separate relevant documents from irrelevant ones, then work with engineers to narrow the list down to the most pertinent references.

Narrowing down search results is often one of the most difficult parts of the process. Because patent rights are defined through language, there are often situations where interpretation is not straightforward. Patent documents also contain a great deal of specialized terminology and technical language, making accurate comprehension essential. There are also times when the perspectives of engineers and intellectual property professionals do not immediately align. That is why I believe it is so important to gather the necessary

information from engineers, clarify any uncertainties, and carefully evaluate each issue one step at a time.

Search tools continue to evolve, and there are now areas where AI can be effectively utilized. However, understanding the technology itself, constructing effective search strategies, and evaluating the results are skills that people develop through experience. There are times when I feel I cannot fully express my thoughts in Japanese, but my immediate goal is to strengthen my patent search skills and aim to become an intellectual property professional who can effectively support development activities.

Bringing What I've Learned Back Home and Becoming a Bridge Between Perodua and Daihatsu

Perodua's intellectual property group is still a relatively new organization. That is why I want to take the knowledge and experience I gain at Daihatsu back with me and share it through real projects when I return to Perodua.

What does an effective intellectual property activity look like? How should we communicate with the Engineering Division? What kinds of rules, standards, and guidelines are needed? I would like to address each of these questions one by one and strengthen Perodua's IP activities in a way that fits the company's own circumstances and needs.

Right now, I am in the position of learning from Daihatsu as a secondee from Perodua. In the future, however, I hope we can exchange ideas as peers, discussing topics such as "This is how we do things at Perodua," and "This is how Daihatsu approaches the same work." I believe that kind of relationship would help both organizations improve the way they work.

To make that possible, I first need to develop a solid understanding of intellectual property work myself. My goal is to become a point of connection between Perodua and Daihatsu, someone who can serve as a bridge between the two organizations. By making the most of every experience, I hope to help establish a strong intellectual property culture at Perodua and contribute to strengthening the IP capabilities of the entire Daihatsu Group.

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