Entrepreneurship Exemplified
Maintenance Technology Division PM Club Circle

Starting in fiscal year 2024, entrepreneurship is added to the values of JATCO's corporate philosophy (T-E^{+}A-M). This time, we spoke with two members of the PM Club of the Maintenance Technology Division who demonstrated entrepreneurial spirit and won a gold medal at the JATCO Group QC Circle Competition in June.

PM Club members Shinya-san (left) and Naya-san(right)

First of all, what did you think when you heard that entrepreneurship would be added to the company mission statement?

Naya:

To be honest, when I first heard about Entrepreneurship I didn't really understand it, and when I tried to relate it to myself, I found it difficult to grasp, but after giving it some thought, I realized that what I do isn't that different. I believe that having pride and a sense of responsibility in conservation will ultimately lead to entrepreneurship.

Shinya:

I was also unfamiliar with the term entrepreneurship and was worried about it, but

it doesn't change the work I do as a conservationist, and I believe that entrepreneurship is about working at each and every site with pride, as always.

Conservation work requires being close to the site

Please tell us about the case study you presented at the JATCO Group QC Circle in June.

Shinya:

The heat treatment process on the Kurimoto 4000t line, which is considered the most important line in the forging plant, had been plagued for many years by cable breakage problems in the transport robot. Now we have a new way to eliminate cable breaks.

Na:ya

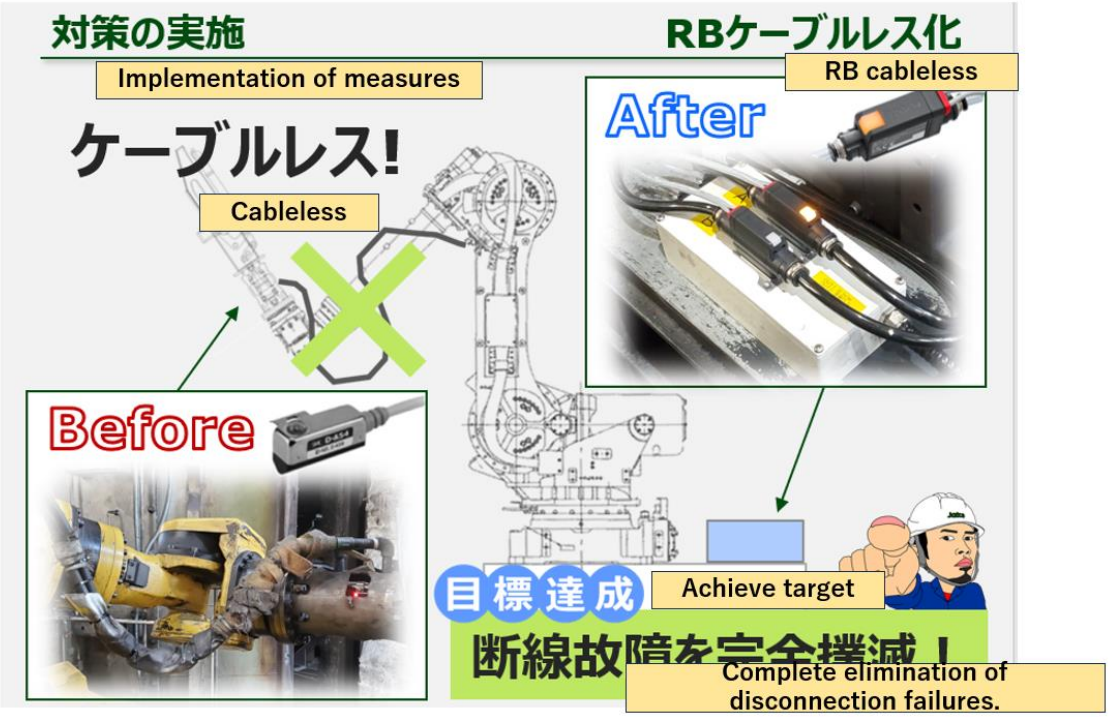
Originally, the cable was a power cable for the cylinder's response switch, and this has been used commonly for many years. However, since what I really wanted was to see the movement of the cylinder, I thought that by utilizing the principles of pneumatic circuits, I might be able to detect it using a pneumatic circuit rather than a response switch. We started this project with the idea that by doing so, it would be possible to relocate the sensor to the robot base, eliminate the response switch at the tip, and ultimately eliminate the cable.

I heard there were risks involved in making improvements.

Naya:

A response switch detects actual movement, but when we used a pneumatic circuit,

we had a lot of trouble because we had to do various tests to see if it would work with the same accuracy as a response switch when there was an abnormality in the air circuit.
Maintenance requires both mechanical and electrical skills, and pneumatic circuits require mechanical skills, but ultimately detection is done with sensors, which means that it ultimately has to be incorporated into the electrical system. I think this is a case where it would not have been possible without the combined skills of both mechanics and electricity.
By working in pairs, club members with specialized skills were able to improve their level and solve the problems.



From the materials of the JATCO Group QC Circle Convention in June

Please tell us about a time when you were able to demonstrate entrepreneurial spirit.

Naya:

The first goal we set was to "eliminate" open circuit failures. There were several ways to "reduce" wire breakage failures, but in order to say with certainty that we had completely eradicated them, we needed to adopt a strategy like this one. JATCO had no track record in this area in the past, so there were times when I thought it might be impossible and I was close to giving up. However, I thought, "I want to

achieve my original goal" and "I don't want to change my goal," so I think that's where I showed my entrepreneurial spirit.

How did your boss react to your efforts to make improvements?

Shinya:

The sensor we used this time was a first for JATCO, but our superiors, starting with Yamazaki-san, supervisor, gave us a lot of support in this new challenge. To meet those expectations, we conducted numerous trials to see if it would fit within the production framework at the site.

Through these activities, we have reduced to zero the wire breakage that had been a long-standing problem. During this process, although maintenance work had previously been divided into mechanical and electrical departments, the pair activities helped them to gain new insights from each other and I believe this has significantly changed their enthusiasm for their daily work.

Yamazaki:

(At the beginning of the interview) I was personally happy when the two of them said that entrepreneurship didn't really resonate with them. The fact that it didn't resonate with you means that you've always worked with that mindset. Up until now, the two of you have been at the forefront of entrepreneurship, but now this awareness has spread to the entire group. I think that has changed a lot.

The project was watched over by the foreman, Yamazaki san (top left), Naya (top right), and Shinya (bottom left).

What does entrepreneurship mean to you two?

Shinya:

The maintenance department's customers are people on the ground, so I wonder how much I can empathize with the feelings of those people.

Naya:

It's a commitment. When it comes to making improvements and all of our regular maintenance work, we receive helpful advice from those around us, but in the end it all comes down to how much we can stick to it. How hard can you face the goals you set for yourself and see them through without giving up? We will continue to be particular about our work in the future.

Keep the entrepreneurial spirit going!

Good luck at the QC Circle National Convention (Okinawa) on December 19th and 20th!

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