

What is TA? What is the appeal that supports the top?

Do you know about the job of TA? TA stands for Technical Assistant and refers to the job of providing technical support to the president, chairman, and other executives. It covers a wide range of important tasks for JATCO, including creating materials and messages for both internal and external use. We asked Mr. Ishii from the Corporate Planning Department, who will be working on a unique task unique to the Nissan Motor Group from April, and former President Sato TAs, about the nature of their work and what makes it so appealing.

Mr. Ishii from the Corporate Planning Department

Sato CEO (April 2025 onwards)



Ishii's days are full of excitement

Q. What kind of work does a TA do?

My first impression was of the president's support. The TA must imagine both the role of the president himself and the role of the person receiving the president's message. I feel the difficulty of having to interact with the president from various perspectives. Since joining the company, I have spent 20 years working in the Cost Planning Department of the Finance Division. During my time in the Cost Planning Department, I was in the project group, and my main job was to check costs at each milestone leading up to the start of production. To be honest, being a TA is a job I have never done before, so I feel quite desperate.

Q. What difficulties did you face as a TA?

There are two: one is business etiquette. Previously, when I visited another company, I ended up giving them a gift myself (laughs). The second is confidentiality management. We check documents and manuscripts with the Legal and Intellectual Property Department and the Global Public Relations Department. One recent achievement that gave me a sense of accomplishment was creating a 40-page explanatory document for Mr. Espinosa, who has become the new president of Nissan. We spent about three weeks discussing the appearance and scenario with President Sato and Chairman Honda. It was difficult, but the discussions seemed to go well on the day.

Q. What did you learn as a TA?

As I mentioned earlier, although it can be difficult to have to consider so many different perspectives, being at the heart of management is extremely rewarding. When I was in the Cost Planning Department, I was conscious of talking about results, focusing on numbers, but as the president, the people I'm talking to already have an idea of what they want to know, so I must imagine that and create materials accordingly. I currently create materials once a week, which takes up a lot of my time. If you can't come up with any ideas, sometimes giving up and taking a relaxing bath can help you come up with something. I am also always supported by my secretary. I was especially confused in April, so I relied heavily on them. I really can't look him in the eye.



Mr. Ishii (second from the left in the back row) on a business trip to JATCO Mexico

Q. Please give a message to those who are aiming to become a TA.

Personally, I think it's a good idea to get some experience as a TA at an early stage. Some people want to "master something" by the time they've been with the company for about 10 years, but being able to learn about the company from an early stage is a big advantage. Also, by being closest to the president, I get to see both his skills, joys, and worries. TAs are by appointment, but raising your hand may also be an option. I would like many people to experience this.

Mr. Sakuma, currently in the Corporate Planning Department

Former Nakatsuka CEO (April 2019 - November 2021) Sato CEO (December 2021 - March 2022)



All the TAs of former Nakatsuka CEO. Sakuma is second from the right.

The appeal of being a TA is that you can work closely with the company president. Attending meetings, learning from the perspective of management, and receiving direct feedback from the president on my ideas and materials was a valuable experience that I could not have had anywhere else. On the other hand, meeting the high quality and overwhelming speed that the president demanded was always a big challenge. In particular, the materials for the GEM (Global Employee Meeting), which is a management message sent by management to employees once every quarter, were extremely difficult, as not only did each slide need to be easy to read, but the overall story structure had to be carefully constructed.

After three years of experience, I learned the importance of simply communicating the conclusion rather than the process. When it comes to logistics (preparation of

conference rooms, venue preparation, traffic flow, and progress), not a second can be wasted, and I strongly felt the importance of perfect planning and checking the site in advance. It's now a good memory.

Current CTO Office Mr.Watanabe

President Sato (April 2022 - March 2023)



JATCO Mr.Watanabe(front row, left) on a business trip to France

In short, the appeal is that it broadens your horizons and knowledge. Through my TA work, I was able to communicate with people from a variety of fields and positions, and I learned about ways of thinking and attitudes toward things beyond just the superficial work (of course, from Mr. Sato as well). As stated in the purpose of publishing this article, the work of a TA is full of mysteries (lol), but rather, I had a hard time understanding and digesting the language (especially the technical terms). I have been working in the development field for about 20 years since joining the company (especially spending a long time in experiments), and when I started working as a TA I didn't know much about other departments, so at first, I worked hard without being able to grasp the situation. I learned to understand the situation and information, including the background, and to connect them to see

ahead. At first, I couldn't understand what President Sato was saying, but I honestly replied, "I don't understand," and "Do you mean ____?" When I asked, they kindly explained everything to me, including the background of the company (I also got the feeling that there are many warm-hearted people at JATCO). As I continued to do this, the dots of information gradually began to connect, and I was able to understand. It would have been best if I could have predicted it, but honestly, I wasn't able to do that.

**Ms. Nakajima, currently in the Production Technology Department
Sato CEO (April 2023 - March 2024)**



Ms. Nakajima supports CEO Business Policy as the moderator

During my time as a TA, my important duties included not only preparing documents but also making advance arrangements with clients who visited the president and ensuring smooth response to visits. Having the opportunity to interact with so many people and learn about the company's activities has deepened my understanding and attachment to it. It was a valuable experience to be able to take on new challenges such as JATCO in Progress with the support of Mr. Sato. On the other hand, there was no clear goal, and we faced difficulties in finding a compromise. With the support of those around me, I was able to move forward little by little. TA is also clearly stated in the division of responsibilities of the Corporate Planning Department. I remember feeling relieved, realizing that it wasn't just my job to carry the bags, but that it was recognized as part of my job. It was through this experience that I was exposed to perspectives that I had never considered before,

and it completely changed the way I see things. I felt the importance of my role as a link between employees and management.

**Mr. Kaneyasu, currently with Nissan Software Defined Vehicle Procurement Department
(April 2024 - March 2025)**



Mr. Kaneyasu served as the moderator for the 2024 JATCO in Progress event.

The appeal of TA is that by observing the actions and decisions of the CEO up close, you can learn the standards of thought and judgment required of a manager! I think it's an opportunity to broaden and deepen your thinking by feeling what is different about you compared to who you are now and thinking about why. You will be able to access information that directly reaches the president, which will help you better understand the company's strategy and direction. You will also learn how to interpret the news content, verify the facts, and think about what actions you should take. Another attractive feature is the opportunity to connect with people you wouldn't normally encounter. Outside the company, I get to meet executives from other companies, key figures and celebrities in the automotive industry, and within the company, I get to meet outstanding and hard-working people in each department, which is a great source of motivation and energy for me. Through my one year of experience as a TA, I really got a real feel for how difficult it is to be a "president." A president needs to have a strong will and courage to make the final

decision. I got to see and hear him struggle with the heavy responsibility of making decisions, his doubts, his suffering, and his loneliness, and I got a real feel for how difficult the job of a president is. At the same time, I worked with the hope of being of some help to the president and becoming his right-hand man that he could rely on. (Your brain will be exhausted. The president often asks me, "Is the battery dead? LOL," he was told.)

Finally, the support of my secretary is also a great help. The president's schedule is often unexpected, and his secretaries handle each adjustment carefully and without error. The president's schedule is made possible by this kind of support.