



Mr. Motoaki Nishiwaki
Director and Evangelist at Microsoft Japan

PRODUCT

YVC-1000MS



Reforming the Way We Work:

Why It's Good and How to Do It A Conversation with Microsoft Japan's Motoaki Nishiwaki

Nowadays, as people seek better work-life balance and greater diversity in the workplace, work styles are changing, and there is demand for corporations to reform their ways of working. However, many corporations can't imagine what they should change or where to start. Motoaki Nishiwaki, director and evangelist at Microsoft Japan, is leading this work style revolution, so we asked him what it means to reform the way people work and specifically how changes should be made.

Reforming the Way People Work, According to Mr. Nishiwaki

Q: First please tell us about your work.

Mr. Nishiwaki: I work as an evangelist, conveying not only all of Microsoft's products and services, but also what kind of changes will arise in the world as a result of IT — such as AI or automated driving.

Q: We heard that you are leading the way in practicing a new way of working. Can you tell us your thoughts on what it means to reform how people work?



Mr. Nishiwaki: I give around 250 lectures a year, so my place of work itself is spread throughout the country. In addition to that, I also telecommute. Recently, I telecommuted from Hakodate. I didn't have any job to do in Hakodate specifically; I just tried changing my workplace.

Time is among the reasons it's now considered important to reform the way people work. People talk about using time efficiently to increase productivity, or reducing work time to increase employee motivation and satisfaction. I want to make our society one where people achieve a fulfilling life based not on the company but on themselves. Once their personal lives are fulfilling can they then do good work.

Q: To reform the way they work, specifically what kind of measures should corporations take?

Mr. Nishiwaki: In conventional ways of working, "3F" was common — that is, a fixed time, a fixed place, and a fixed device. I think it's important to change this to "3A" — anytime, anywhere, and any device. In order to achieve 3A, it goes without saying that we must change the company culture and practices. But to do so, companies must resolve to change from the top down.

Take meetings, for example. These days there are many chat tools or cloud services that let you participate in meetings from remote locations. By using IT, even members who are not on-site can participate without being restricted by location. We should skillfully use IT in these kinds of places to change the company culture.

Q: It seems that many Japanese corporations still have a negative opinion about implementing chat tools for meetings and daily work.

Mr. Nishiwaki: If we start with the negatives, like “it can’t do this” or “that isn’t good,” then we put constraints on our tools. What I want you to consider is that nowadays, everyone — not only young people, but people of older generations — routinely uses chat tools when away from the company. In that case, isn’t it more unnatural not to use chat tools in work?

Some corporations have the opinion that, if they include chat tools in work, then employees will talk too much about their private lives with one another, but such conversations take place even without chat tools, don’t they? The conversations people normally have directly will just be done over chat, so it shouldn’t be that much of a problem.

It’s strange that people use chat tools all the time outside of work, but refuse them at work. That’s exactly why it’s important to change the culture.

Successfully Reforming Ways of Working Using Skype for Business



Q: Skype is an example of chat tools available at work. Please tell us some of the advantages of the Skype for Business service, which your company has released for corporations.

Mr. Nishiwaki: Nowadays, Skype is routinely implemented not only by enterprises but also startup corporations, and it is used in international conferences and the like. It has spread throughout the Japanese corporate world and is implemented by over 60 percent of listed corporations. To encourage its use in corporations, we enabled users to do other work while using the chat tool, such as working in Microsoft Office. We also equipped it with functions for clearer audio and provided fully extensive security features. But even after all those improvements, I think a big advantage was the brand recognition that Skype is used all over the world.

Q: What role do you believe Skype for Business can play to help successfully reform the way people work?

Mr. Nishiwaki: Increased communication speed and improved productivity are the largest merits of implementing Skype for Business. In conventional ways of working, email played a big role, but each email requires a series of tasks: You write a document, send it, the recipient reads it, writes a response, sends it, then you receive the response, and read that. The cycle is long and very inefficient, and often leads to miscommunication. With chat tools, the exchange can be done instantly and while looking at one another. The speed and improved productivity make it easier to work and increase satisfaction, ultimately leading to happier lives.

Skype lets you communicate with people no matter where they are. We no longer care about location. In other words, “anywhere” is the premise. The person you are talking to might be working at home or on a park bench, in a regional office or an overseas branch, or maybe in a cafe in Hakodate like me. But where they are doesn’t really matter. I’m sure that, in reality, there is also the need to make some administrative fixes, such as changing company employment rules. In order to change the culture like that, I think it should be done top-down.

Using Skype for Business More Effectively with the YVC-1000MS

Q: The YVC-1000MS, a unified communications microphone and speaker system released by Yamaha in October, is a Microsoft-certified model for Skype for Business. Please tell us what you thought after actually using it.

Mr. Nishiwaki: This product really meets my expectations from Yamaha. The performance and sound quality for both the microphone and the speaker are wonderful. It's also equipped with echo-canceller and noise-reduction functions, which are necessary in online meetings. It also boasts high expandability by connecting microphones in a daisy-chain. Since it can even be used in a large room — about 10 meters by 10 meters — I believe it can be used not only for meetings but also for seminars and education.



Skype for Business meeting using the YVC-1000MS



Scalable and flexible solution for middle- and large-sized meetings with six to 40 people



One microphone can accommodate around eight people and daisy-chain up to five distinct microphones.

Q: What are the advantages of the YVC-1000MS when using Skype for Business?

Mr. Nishiwaki: I believe the Yamaha microphone and speaker system plays a big role in creating spaces for successfully reforming the way people work. Regarding meetings in the future, of course telecommuting from home or away from the office will increase, but I believe we will also see more cases of meetings between tertiary locations, such as satellite offices or shared spaces.

If workers had a microphone and speaker system like the YVC-1000MS in these spaces, they could more effectively utilize Skype's potential and improve the quality of their meetings. I expect that, to proceed with reforming ways of working based on 3A, systems like the YVC-1000MS will continue to evolve.



About Yamaha

Since its founding in 1887, the Yamaha Corporation Group has developed its business activities focusing on musical instruments, audio products, Yamaha music schools, semiconductors, and other products and services related to sound and music. With its unique expertise and sensibilities, gained from our devotion to sound and music, Yamaha is committed to creating excitement and cultural inspiration together with people around the world. With 10 years of history in the Japan market, Yamaha's dedicated unified communications department focuses on solutions that enhance communication and help organizations reach their business goals.

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