

A STORY BEHIND ISO

International Affairs Department

"Oh, dear, we will be in trouble!"

It was my honest feeling when my colleague gave me the news last autumn. She had just returned from Dublin, where the fourth ISO/TC275 meeting was held, and the information she had brought back was that Japan might host the next ISO/TC275 meeting in 2017.

Eventually, the fifth ISO/TC275 meeting convened in Yokohama from November 6 to 9 made a great success. Though I can look back on the meeting with the excitement that it was perfect for hosting the ISO meeting in Japan, it was confirmed the long way of its preparation had just started with a bit of panic.

Since there are other opportunities to report the main issues of ISO, I will give you a behind-the-scenes story focusing on "logistics" in this newsletter. Logistics is a kind of "thankless" job but still significant. I'm telling my personal opinions about some hints for successful projects. I hope you will enjoy my "plain" report with "little photos."

1. CAPITALIZING ON "IMAGINATION"

When I started logistics, I set a personal goal. That is a "behind-the-scenes job of which meeting attendees are unaware." Logistics is a typical unnoticed job, and if logistics draws attention, it means "failure." I did not want to make people feel a background staff was in trouble or confused. Meeting logistics is nothing less than setting up a platform that makes attendees concentrate on discussions without worry.

To achieve the goal, I should be an "attendee." To be precise, I must imagine if I were an attendee. So, I tried to pretend to be a meeting participant to figure out what they needed using all my imagination. I simulated experiencing the meeting from the beginning to the end. In my opinion, if there were no problems in the simulation, serious issues should not happen.

On the other hand, too much imagination becomes an obsession. In my dreams of Yokohama meeting, I talked with overseas participants in "Japanese." I

wondered if my simulation was insufficient or just a matter of my English capability.

2. CAPITALIZING ON "GIRL POWER"

I was not satisfied when I almost finished the "acceptable" preparation, and I wanted the Yokohama meeting to be more impressive with Japanese hospitality. We started looking for something extra that only could remind attendees of the TC275 conference in Yokohama, Japan.

We got a list of dishes in advance from the Japanese restaurant reserved for a reception dinner. We created an English menu including food names and their explanations. For example, our definition of "Three kind's fresh sashimi" is "Sashimi is very fresh raw fish sliced into thin pieces, so to speak, it is sushi without rice." Many attendees looked curious about Japanese dishes and their descriptions and took pictures.



Attendees read descriptions while enjoying foods

Besides, we prepared a unique conference souvenir representing Yokohama.

It seems to me that this sensitive and attentive manner is thanks to "girl power." Even men have "girl" power, and capitalizing on girl power enabled many compliments from participants.

3. SCALING UP WITH TEAMWORK

I was impressed by the power of teamwork. As you know, one person's imagination or girl power has its limits. All hands, including people in charge of logistics and some experts of TC 275, worked together for the Yokohama meeting. Experts gave us valuable advice during some critical preparation phases, and these tips encouraged us and accelerated logistic operations.

4. NEVER FORGET APPRECIATIONS

ISO/TC 275 meeting 2017 could not succeed if there were no support from the Environmental Planning Bureau of Yokohama City. The people of Yokohama City took the event seriously, which made me feel we were a team. Yokohama has



After the meeting, smiling attendees

an accumulation of sophisticated hospitality as a traditional international city. They provided a lot of know-how we could learn. I'll take this occasion to show my appreciation to Yokohama City. I also thank experts for giving us a surprise at the reception to show their gratitude for the back work. They shined a light on the unnoticed logistics.

I rest my case. Thank you for taking the time to read my report.