

Workstyle Reform in the Film Production Industry

Before shooting movies or TV series, as a general rule, it is obligatory to conduct respect training to affirm the importance of working with mutual respect. The respect training program run by PEACEMIND Inc. is recommended by the Japan Motion Picture Production Standards Association, and we have commissioned approximately 70 titles since 2021. We held a three-way discussion on workstyle reform with Hideto Ogihara, President and CEO of PEACE MIND Inc., Vice President Yuji Kojima and Senior Executive Officer Yuichi Shigemori of TOEI COMPAMY, LTD.

Interviewer: Hideto Ogihara, President and Representative Director, PEACEMIND inc.

Interviewer: Yuji Kojima, Vice President, Studio Business, TOEI COMPANY, LTD.

Shigemori Yuichi, Senior Executive Officer, Human Resources, TOEI COMPANY, LTD.

Workstyle reform in the film industry

Ogiwara:

I think that workstyle reform in the film industry has accelerated in recent years, and I would like to ask how Toei thinks about this trend in the film industry as a whole.

Kojima:

The film industry has always been characterized by long working hours and a strict hierarchical working environment. With the belief that we must improve this situation both in the film industry and at Toei, we have been working on workstyle reforms for over ten years, aiming to create a workplace that offers job satisfaction and comfortable working conditions. While I think that things have improved significantly over the past ten years, I also think that we need to continue taking even more measures in the future.

Eiteki (J-MOPS), and being the first Japanese film company to introduce respect training

Ogiwara:

When shooting *Last of the Wolves* (released August 2021), directed by Shiraishi Kazuya, Toei became the first Japanese film company to introduce respect training. How was it received on set? Now, respect training is being introduced into almost all of Toei's film productions, and I think that by taking the initiative and taking concrete action against harassment, as a major film company, Toei will have a positive impact on the film industry as a whole. How do you feel about the changes taking place at your company?

Kojima:

While we all knew in theory that harassment was bad, in all honesty, there was a tendency for all of us in the workplace to think that it didn't really have anything to do with us. Because of this situation, I didn't think that simply giving lectures on prohibited items would make harassment a matter of personal concern for those in the workplace. I think that respect training—which delves into the reasons why certain actions are wrong, rather than simply giving lectures on what is prohibited—has given people the opportunity to think about these issues as something that concerns them personally, rather than just someone else. As a result, I feel that we have become able to work with mutual respect, even in workplaces that are busy with schedules and other matters, and that this has led to smoother communication and more harmonious workplaces.

Ogiwara:

I would like to ask you about any issues you have encountered while introducing respect training and working to implement workstyle reforms.

Kojima:

We recently held a training session for actors affiliated with Toei Studios Kyoto for the first time, and it was very well received. In particular, many of the younger actors said that they were very grateful that the company was making such efforts. While it's easy to just make a verbal declaration, I felt that actually taking turning those words into action would mean a lot for people working on the front lines. At the same time, some staff members who have participated in many productions commented that

they were hearing the same thing every time. Since some of the staff taking part in the training have never taken it before, we have no choice but to make them all take the same training, and I think it would be difficult to have different training for different people because it would make it difficult to have a common understanding—but I would like to ask you how we can address this issue.

Ogiwara:

It's you say, and at PEACEMIND we would like to consider improvement plans for such points and provide support. Specifically, I would like to introduce, in the front line, the reflections and feedback of staff who have participated in the trainings so that we can share raw opinions of front-line staff, and devise ways to ensure that the training does not end there.

Shigemori:

In the Human Resources Department, we also provide harassment training for employees who work in offices, so I would like to continue working towards creating a workplace environment where we can ensure mutual respect not only on set, but throughout the company.

Ogiwara:

I think that the efforts of Eiteki (J-MOPs, the Japan Motion Picture Production Standards Association) are wonderful, and of great significance both to the Japanese film industry and to those aspiring to work in it. Toei has received certification for many of its films since the first film to be certified under Certification System by J-MOPs. What changes have there been within your company as a result of this system?

Kojima:

Although the system only came into effect in April 2023 and it hasn't even been two years yet, one thing I feel now when I'm on a film set is that the standards that must be followed have become clear. Unlike in the past, when there were no common rules and staff on set would just get on with the job in front of them with grit and tenacity, now everyone—including producers and directors—has a common awareness of the standards to be followed, and this is enabling us to solve problems. As a result, I think we have come closer to a work environment where it is easier to work than in the past.

Expansion of human resources investment

The Toei Group's medium- to long-term vision also mentions expanding investment in human resources to strengthen the movie business. I would like to ask you about your specific initiatives with regard to this.

Shigemori:

We have always viewed long working hours at film studios as a very serious problem. While on one hand it is important to take measures against harassment at production sites or on a work task unit basis, we would like to address this issue with the understanding that it is a group-wide effort. However, since there are people in various positions on film sets—not only Toei employees—I think that respect training plays an important role in ensuring that everyone has the same awareness.

We have also formed a diversity and inclusion (D&I) project with our employees, and have been working on D&I. Last year we announced the "Toei BRAVE Declaration" slogan. "BRAVE" is an acronym for "Be Respectful And Value Empathy," and the word itself also has the meaning of "courage to change/not change" and "courage to accept others and accept new things." It expresses the desire to engage in D&I efforts with that kind of courage.

What is " Working Better Together® " ?

Q Ogiwara:

At PEACEMIND we have the slogan, Working Better Together® ". What does "Working Better Together® " mean to you?

A Kojima:

I think that the most important thing is to enjoy ourselves and have fun working, so I think that creating a workplace where everyone is always smiling is what makes us work better together. Of course, it's work, not a game, so I want us to aim to create a workplace where people can experience a sense of

fulfillment rather than the fun of playing.

A Shigemori:

I want us to create a workplace where people can voice their opinions without worry. If our opinions are always rejected, or you are reprimanded for what you say, people become withdrawn, and ultimately I don't think it leads to good work. For this reason, I think it is important for both listeners and speakers to have the right attitude, so it is important to communicate with mutual respect.

What is respect training?

https://www.peacemind.co.jp/service/training/respect_training