

Biography

Masaaki Imai

Masaaki Imai is Founder of KAIZEN Institute (KI), which was established in Switzerland (1985) to help companies introduce KAIZEN[®] concepts, systems, and tools. KI (also now known as KAIZEN Institute Consulting Group- KICG) has offices in over 30 countries around the globe.

Over the last 30+ years, Mr. Imai has held lectures on KAIZEN, Lean and other related management subjects, as well as having consulted with global companies (outside of Japan) and assisting them in their process of introducing change and continual improvement. KAIZEN Institute dispatches both local and global consultants, who are corporate managers and academics and considered experts in the various technicalities of KAIZEN, to various assignments to work closely with the local KAIZEN consultants. Mr. Imai's role has been one of integrating various KAIZEN management practices, such as Just-in-time, TQM, and TPM, into the cultural environment of client companies. KAIZEN Institute regularly sponsors KAIZEN Tours, within Japan, Europe and other strategic locations where best practices can be found. During these 'Tours', participants can visit world-class companies that have attained fame through their practices of these KAIZEN activities.

Mr. Imai deals not only with top management of its client company, but also can relate to problems at the opposite end of the organization, namely, Gemba or 'the real place where value is added'. He understands the steps required to make a company world-class and moving it from a result-oriented to process-oriented company.

McGraw-Hill published his book on Japanese management entitled "KAIZEN, The Key to Japan's Competitive Success" in New York in November 1986. It has been translated into 16 languages and has sold well over 300,000 copies.

In May, 1997 "*Gemba KAIZEN, A Commonsense, Low-cost Approach to Management*", a sequel to "KAIZEN" was published by McGraw-Hill in New York. The French, Dutch, Portuguese and German translations were published simultaneously. The Spanish, Indonesian, and Chinese translations were published in 1998.

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In November, 1998, he attended the Silver Jubilee ARTDO (Asian Regional Training & Development Organization) Convention held in New Delhi and received the Asia-Pacific Human Resource Development Award “in recognition of his immense contribution to business efficiency and productivity through the application of the philosophy of step-by-step improvement, and in grateful appreciation of the positive and revolutionary impact that his best seller books – *KAIZEN* and *Gemba KAIZEN* – have made on the lives of millions of people around the world.” He delivered a valedictory speech on that occasion.

In June 1999, he was invited to present a keynote address at the 11th Annual Conference & Awards Ceremony of the Shingo Prize for Excellence in Manufacturing of the College of Business of Utah State University, where his book *Gemba KAIZEN* received the Shingo Research and Professional Publication Prize for 1999.

Prior to the establishment of KAIZEN Institute, Mr. Imai was the Chairman of the Cambridge Corporation, an international management consulting and executive recruiting firm, which he founded in 1962. As a consultant active in such field as recruiting, personnel management, organizational studies and executive development, Mr. Imai personally assisted more than 200 foreign and joint venture companies in Japan. He was President of the Japan Federation of Recruiting and Employment Agency Associations between 1976 and 1986.

Mr. Imai was born in Tokyo in 1930. After receiving his BA from the University of Tokyo in 1955, he stayed on at his alma mater to do graduate work in international relations.

Mr. Imai has taken active part in several American Management Association’s Seminars on doing business in Japan, and has given Gemba KAIZEN seminars and workshops all over the world.

End of Biography

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