

Introduction of the Monozukuri Center

Monozukuri is a Japanese word which means “manufacturing” and is now used to refer to the unique Japanese style of manufacturing. The role of the Monozukuri Center at Hitachi Powdered Metals is to promote improvement which contributes to high efficiency production by minimizing loss in the production and control aspects in each process in the mass production of powder metallurgy products, and as a result, contributes to the solution of environmental problems and improvement of profitability. The specific content includes:

- (1) Stabilization of quality and improvement of efficiency by strengthening technologies in the basic processes of powder metallurgy.
- (2) Improvement of efficiency by maximizing the capacity of existing equipment.
- (3) Promotion of improvement activities (PI Activities: Productivity Innovation) to efficient production methods by reducing work-in-process.
- (4) Promotion of VEC Activities (Value Engineering for Customers).
- (5) Continuous implementation of “skill transmission.”

A portion of the activities of the Monozukuri Center are introduced in Table 1.

Table 1 Main activities of the Monozukuri Center.

Activity		Content
Strengthening of technologies of basic processes	Raw materials/ compaction	Improvement of uniform and speedy filling, compacting stroke, control conditions, quality evaluations technologies, etc.
	Sintering	Improvement of technologies related to higher sintering efficiency.
	Machining	Improvement of technologies related to higher machining efficiency, such as machining tact, blade life improvement, etc.
	Heat treatment	Improvement of low strain conditions, control conditions, etc.
PI activities		Continuous improvement activities for efficient production methods.
VEC activities		Promotion of company-wide cost reduction activities.
Skill transmission		Transmission of powder metallurgy production technologies to the next generation of employees.

In addition to the above, Hitachi Powdered Metals has a tradition which is called “*sorenssha*” in Japanese and means a “school for training the mind, body, and skills to create products with one’s whole heart” as a concrete form of the company’s “three As philosophy” (Actual site, Actual product, Actual time), which has been handed down from its early history. The Monozukuri Center will also take over this work.

The Center will also carry out activities which contribute to heightening the awareness of persons in charge of manufacturing and vitalizing the workplace by supporting the patenting of technologies that have the true feeling of the manufacturing site, using ideas from the site which are being applied to mass production.