In October 2021, Mr. Mitoji Yabunaka became the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Mitsubishi Electric. This was the first time an Outside Director had assumed this role, and this decision was made to strengthen governance.

In the years that followed, the company faced a series of challenges that necessitated significant reforms. These included a crisis in 2021, which required the company to fundamentally rethink its approach to quality control and leadership. Despite these challenges, the company has made strides in improving corporate value and focusing on sustainability.

Yabunaka: Meetings have been held between the Outside Directors and the Team Sousei members, and this has helped to foster a collaborative environment. Mr. Uruma and the Executive Officers have taken the lead in promoting this culture, and the results have been positive.

Uruma: It is necessary to seriously discuss how we can work together on reforms. It is also essential to provide them with appropriate opportunities for education and experience. We are currently working on creating a system to take the knowledge that was previously locked up within each individual, and to systematize this and pass it on as a valuable asset of the company. Recently, new movements have been born through the initiatives of Team Sousei, such as the start of efforts to establish “Mitsucircle” where employees can connect and learn from each other across business and departmental boundaries.

Yabunaka: I would like all employees to be sensitive to changes in society and look to the wider world. I would also like them to deepen their exchanges with people from different fields and expand their imagination, such as creating new things by combining the technologies held by the company and their departments. In addition, I encourage employees to seriously exchange and share opinions without being afraid of argument. Through serious discussions, it is not uncommon for people to come across ideas that are different from their own and that help them gain new awareness. It is also important to have an environment that accepts entirely new ideas and bold forms of individuality with a broad mind.

Uruma: I think that what is needed is a place to utilize and nurture new ideas. Nothing new will be born if we reject proposed new ideas on the grounds that there seems to be no place to use it within the Company or that it is difficult in terms of costs. Setting up a mechanism to put ideas out first will help improve employees’ motivation, even if the ideas do not end up working at the first step. I hope employees will be able to dream about technologies and products that go beyond conventional wisdom, looking ahead to the next 10 or 20 years to come.

Yabunaka: Despite its innovative technologies, I’d say Mitsubishi Electric may have been a rather conservative company until now. But it is precisely because we live in an era of such rapid change that people place more value on things that are a little strange but that are also interesting and that give people something to dream about, as opposed to something that is stereotypical and lacking in individuality. I hope that Mitsubishi Electric will be an interesting company where employees can continue to take on challenges while envisioning a bright future.