

Nissan Motor Iberica, S.A. (Spain)

Individual Awareness and Action

A popular Spanish saying states; "A truly orderly person is not just someone who diligently puts things back in order – but someone who prevents disorder in the first place".

Expanding on this perspective, Nissan Motor Iberica, S.A. (NMISA) believes that employees who are constantly aware of environmental concerns will as a matter of course make special efforts to work in an eco-friendly manner right from the very start of everything they do. Designers for example, do everything possible to draw up plans that maximize effective and waste-free use of resources. This kind of awareness not only benefits the environment, but also leads to substantial resource conservation for the company and society as a whole.

It is said that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. In the same way, NMISA knows that it is crucial to raise the level of environmental awareness of every member of every team to develop a work culture that operates on the basis of 'waste not, want not.' NMISA firmly believes that successful environmental activities need to be carried out in a way that includes all employees through such initiatives as environmental education.

Environmental Education in Montcada

The Montcada stamping plant provides detailed and systematic environmental education in the form of regular training for its employees and its contractors working on-site. Based on ISO 14001 environmental policies, NMISA has distributed pocket-size booklets that include a list of the environmental principles the General Director has publicly announced NMISA will follow and a checklist of environmental best practices. These booklets are also given to contractors in a concerted effort to raise the awareness of everyone working at the plant. There are also assessment sheets that evaluate each employee's level of environmental education and set appropriate targets for improving it. Using ISO 14000 criteria, individual score sheets and progress reports are posted every month to ensure every employee stays abreast of any new developments in the area of environmental management. Educational opportunities are provided as needed throughout the year and the names of participating employees and contractors are posted on announcement boards at the plant.

'Clear communication' has been found to be the single most important factor in raising employees' environmental awareness. For example, bulletin boards are used to display the amounts of electricity, gas and water consumed at the plant each day. These amounts are compared with the volumes used in the average Spanish home along with other concepts aimed at explaining environmental issues in more familiar, everyday terms that are easy to understand.

Another effective means of raising environmental awareness is the annual poster contest. The event creates a sense of community, and employees at NMISA say they identify with these posters, which they and their fellow workers have made,



Making the best use of creativity, using a bulletin board that explains environmental activities.



The winner's work of the slogan poster contest in 2004



A section manager explaining the environmental management system to employees (Zona Franca)

and that seeing them displayed around the plant has raised their motivation to participate in the company's other environmental activities as well.

Zona Franca: Clean Workplaces

Since NMISA began implementing on-site education activities, employees have submitted a wide range of suggestions for environmental preservation – further proof of how everyday efforts lead to concrete and measurable progress.

The achievements of the NMISA transmission plant in Zona Franca provide an excellent illustration of how investing in environmental education creates positive returns for the company. In transmission plants, oil is used during the cutting processes to lower frictional heat between the cutter and manufacturing materials. As a result, oil often drips from parts carried around the facilities. Noticing this, an employee at Zona Franca submitted a suggestion to improve the situation by using a spin dryer. This dryer, a machine that uses a centrifugal separation technique, was then custom-built to remove excess oil from processed parts. The idea earned great reviews for not only helping to keep the plant clean by solving the problem of oil dripping onto the plant floor, but also for making it possible for the extra oil to be collected for reuse, thereby cutting down the amount of new oil needed at the plant.

What NMISA takes the greatest pride in is that this example could be traced back directly to the plant's strategic efforts to raise environmental awareness and action of every employee at the plant.

Extending Environmental Education Principles to the Home, Community and Country

NMISA Managing Director José Vicente de los Mozos speaks of his resolve for the company's progress: "Our environmental activities are just getting off the ground. Because we do not expect people's awareness to change overnight, our goal is to build a new culture step by step, always keeping a long-term perspective." He pointed out that environmental management is culturally specific and is something that requires time and patience. Precisely because this endeavor calls for a long-term approach, he emphasized the importance of beginning at the earliest possible stage with each employee and the need for tailoring the training material to each individual's own unique learning requirements.

Every employee at Zona Franca takes the ideas and know-how gleaned from their environmental education at the company everywhere they go outside the company as well. The company's efforts to cultivate knowledgeable employees, always taking environmental issues into consideration, has created a ripple effect that travels outwards from the plant to the home, to the local community, and finally to the whole country and beyond. At NMISA, employees believe it is this process that best develops the understanding and the strength needed to help move society in the right direction.