

From Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) San Francisco Office

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“Myth and Truth on starting, expanding and prospering your business in Japan”

Dear Sir/Madam in the California Business Community,

Today, I would like to discuss about the Myth and Truth on starting, expanding and prospering your business in Japan.

Once upon a time in this country, we had colleagues that were called “revisionists” who believed that Japan should be forced to become like the United States. These “revisionists” believed this because industries from the U.S. were not necessarily successful against Japanese counterparts in global markets due to Japanese unfair policies or practices.

Was that the truth or a myth?

Well, since then, for example, ICT and semi-conductor industries from the United States have been dramatically more successful without major changes on Japanese policies or practices. It has been true even in the Japanese market. Rather, there, we have seen competition among companies from the U.S. in which some have grabbed more market share than others. As a matter of fact, companies that have deeper understanding of the nature of market and key success factors could be thriving even more among colleagues from the U.S. More or less, same thing is true with Japanese companies in the U.S. market. Though many Japanese automobile companies have been successful, some of them have literally abandoned this market.

The important thing is that we should understand delicate balance between the commonality and the diversity among various national markets. Even in the same national market, the nature has sometimes changed from time to time. In other

words, we should face and understand the reality of each market that might be placed between these so-called truths and myths.

Especially, OECD countries including United States, Canada, Japan, European countries and Oceania countries share capitalistic value on economic activities that cuts across the global market today, though there are variations on societal policies, frameworks or practices, reflection on history, culture, and politics within the national boundary.

This kind of understanding is indispensable when we start the collaboration based on “Innovation-mindset” and “Business eco-system” where companies from both sides of the Ocean decisively cope with inexperienced new frontiers to get opportunities from unprecedented and challenging issues, which I stated in the last letter.

We are now planning to hold Economic Interaction Forum/Seminar on February 10th, 2014 in San Francisco, in which we would like to address “Myth and Truth” issues mentioned above in addition to Innovation-mindset, Business eco-system and the Japanese market issues. In order to facilitate the understanding of these issues, real activities, and to forge the interactive movements among us, we would like to invite as many business, trade and investment related people as possible to our Economic Interaction Forum/Seminar next year.

Best regards,



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