

Vol.5

Mentor Chairman and CEO, Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd.



Hiomichi Iwasa

Keidanren *Women's Executive Network*

Leadership Mentor Program

Make innovations with conviction



Keidanren Women's Executive Network

Leadership Mentor Program Vol.5

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Innovations to Japan's real estate industry

In the past, Japan's real estate industry was all about capital gains. However, after Japan's economic bubble burst, the land myth disintegrated, and the real estate market itself seemed in danger of collapse. It was around that time that I became president of my company in 1998, and in the hope of breaking free from this critical situation, I worked hard to create the "J-REIT market." This is a real estate securitization market, the global standard, in which income gains are used to assess property values and move the market. At the start, the lack in progress in the Japanese market's understanding of the securitization of real estate made the going difficult, but I was committed to the task, in the belief that it was up to my company, as a leader in the real estate industry, to propel the industry forward and create innovation. This year marks the 15th anniversary of the J-REIT market, which has grown into a market with a total asset value of 15 trillion yen.

As an urban development project for the new era, we bid for the former site of the Defense Agency in 2001. It was on that site that we built Tokyo Midtown, a mixed-use development with a total floor space of 560,000m². With the aim of creating real added value that incorporated new perspectives, we brought in women as leaders in the urban development aspects of Tokyo Midtown, and actively incorporated their ideas in all aspects of the project, from the selection of commercial tenants to the design of the interiors.

Today, with the theme of "urban life with a superior quality of everyday living," Tokyo Midtown is a very popular complex that continues to improve with age, increasing in value every year. The year 2017 marks the tenth anniversary of the opening of Tokyo Midtown, which attracts 30,000,000 visitors annually, a number to rival Tokyo Disneyland.

The importance of leaders having conviction

Through these experiences, what I want to convey to women executives is this: the importance of leaders "having conviction." I approached the challenges of J-REIT and Tokyo Midtown with the great motivation of doing it "for Japan, for Tokyo, and for the revival of the Japanese real estate industry." You must read the times with a broad perspective and possess the ability to create innovation that will lead to new products, new services, and new fields. While I make no distinctions between men and women as leaders, compared with men, women do tend to have better intuition, they are extremely fair, and possess better communication skills, so I hope you will all make the most of your advantages as women.

You are all front-runners and role models for younger women. A rich private life will benefit your work as well, so I hope you will switch properly between your time at work and your time off. Also, as we move forward, we will not only be asking women to step forward; men must change as well. As your senior in life, I will strive to create the environment to allow you all to do so.

Mentor Profile

Hiomichi Iwasa

Chairman of the Board of Councillors, Keidanren

Chairman and CEO, Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd.

Hiomichi Iwasa graduated from the Faculty of Law at the Keio University in 1965 and received a MA from the Keio University in 1967. He joined Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd. in 1967. Iwasa became President and Chief Executive Officer in 1998. He then assumed his current position as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer in 2011.

His current professional and social positions include Chairman of the Association for Real Estate Securitization, Chairman of the Real Estate Companies Association of Japan, Chairman of East Nippon Expressway Company Limited. He served as Vice Chairman of Keidanren from 2008 to 2012, Vice Chairman of the Board of Councillors of Keidanren from 2012 to 2014, and is now Chairman of the Board of Councillors of Keidanren.

