

APAC Entrepreneur

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**TAKAO
HATTORI**

PRESIDENT OF DATACRAFT INC

A PIONEER WHO RESHAPED THE FACE OF JAPAN'S DEFENSE SYSTEMS

TAKAO HATTORI

PRESIDENT OF DATACRAFT INC



A Pioneer Who Reshaped the Face of Japan's Defense Systems

Determination defines the firmness of one's purpose. No matter the situation and circumstance, a determined mind can pave its own path to success. Determination demands courage, hard work, and the willingness to get up after every fall. Strong willpower and focus will surely lead one to their desired goals.

An epitome of a determined mindset is Takao Hattori, President of DataCraft Inc. who with his own efforts and handwork helped a nation to revamp their traditional defense systems and emerge as one of the powerful countries in the world.

"I had no intention of starting an entrepreneurial business from the beginning," Hattori unfolds how he became a key player in Japan's defense systems. His research and studies based on a multi-national defense logistics system named NATO Codification System (NCS) made him realize the significance of entrepreneurship. All those analysis showed him how Japan was far behind than the rest of the world in this field. So, to bring this issue into the spotlight, Hattori started publishing an online periodical newsletter twice a month in 2007. This gradually gained him the consent and cooperation of various people including various government agencies and related organizations. It was those people who wanted him to do this as a business and hence Hattori decided to begin his entrepreneurial business. Exchanging views with industry advocates and related people helped

in gaining new knowledge to further move forward to his goal. In addition, his supportive colleagues introduced him to more people which later became crucial turning points of his entrepreneurial journey.

Handling such a sensitive subject definitely came with its fair share of difficulties. Hattori mentions the main two categories of challenges he had to tackle in order to move forward. If the first one was to get NATO, which has NCS, to cooperate the second main challenge was to get the Japanese government to take action. Interestingly, the NATO officials were pleased to join hands with Japan and offered their cooperation and information. However, the Japanese government and companies were reluctant to take action. They strongly believed that inducing NCS into Japan will result in more losses than gains. So, to debunk all these false theories, Hattori gave numerous presentations to government officials through various supporters. His core agenda was to emphasize how all these were for the nation's interest rather than for a personal or individual one. But, since the introduction of the NCS to Japan was supposed to be budgeted by the Japanese government, it took a lot more time than expected. Surprisingly, around that time, Hattori received an interview request for his NATO project from Nikkei Business which is a leading business publisher in Japan. This particular article was well received widely and many came to know about his project. This positively influenced the decision of the Japanese government.



Most **INFLUENTIAL**
ENTREPRENEUR FROM
JAPAN
TO WATCH IN 2022



TAKAO HATTORI

PRESIDENT OF DATACRAFT INC.



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The important thing about my business journey is that I always had friends and acquaintances who helped me at each juncture.

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How it all started...

Hattori is an engineering graduate from Waseda University. After graduation, he got a chance to work with different American companies. All those years taught, he realized that he was not supposed to be tied up in an established company and rather destined to create his own venture and become an entrepreneur. Furthermore, after losing WWII, Japan was under the command of the U.S for a long time. Being a close observer of the current situations, Hattori, who worked in the defense sector of U.S. companies, was able to recognize the differences in the defense systems of the two countries. This impelled him to inception DataCraft Inc. in 1984, to offer services to cover the technical weakness in Japan's defense capabilities. The company was a success since they were able to acquire the services that were public information services provided by the U.S Department of Defense in Japan. Interestingly, the company is now recognized as the Japanese Government Participation of Qualified Suppliers..

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A leader must always be in the forefront, embody what they want, nurture enthusiasm, and must possess the skill to persuade.

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While explaining his journey and success, Hattori reminds one thing: How important it is to form and maintain relationships in a business environment. “A man alone cannot accomplish anything by himself,” says Hattori “The important thing about my business journey is that I always had friends and acquaintances who helped me at each juncture.” He further asserts how a friend of his from the U.S introduced him to a bigger and long-term project which turned out to be a full-fledged entry into the NATO systems. As a person who was never satisfied with the status quo, he continued to try new fields and made new friends and acquaintances along the way. He states all his relationships were stepping stones to success.

As a business leader with decades of experience in the business realm, Hattori shares his views about the qualities of an entrepreneur. “A leader must always be in the forefront, embody what they want, nurture enthusiasm, and must possess the skill to persuade,” affirms Hattori. He believes that entrepreneurs never fit in an organizational set-up as they are never satisfied with the status quo and will be constantly in the pursuit to create things of value. He also advises that a successful entrepreneur must excel in making friends, supporters, and collaborators. In other words, entrepreneurship is more than aspiring to be just a business leader. To the young entrepreneurs, Hattori reminds to not be afraid and to have patience, and believe in themselves. If they do so, they will be able to move big rocks.



Cultivating a Culture with No Compromises

Since the field of business is defense, DataCraft Inc. never allows compromises but often agrees to some extent of agreements without harming the flow of business. Hattori believes compromises are byproducts and must not be a driving factor for new endeavors. Thus, every single person in charge is responsible for all the work assigned to him except for the indication of the purpose and schedule. Hattori testifies such an approach never fails to be effective and efficient. However, the persons in charge are offered assistance according to their requests. With the pandemic and its restrictions in place, DataCraft Inc. employees are allowed to work from wherever they want, at whatever time they want. By the end of the day, they are happy that they can move the work.

In the wake of the Ukraine crisis, the Japanese government has strengthened its cooperative relationship with NATO. 2022 is also the year when a Japanese prime minister participated in a NATO meeting for the first time and offered their alliance to work with NATO. Moreover, the invitation of NCS started by the company in 2019, turned out to be a successful one. On top of that, the Japanese government supports all of DataCraft Inc.'s activities by increasing the budget every year.

Hattori finds pride in how his entrepreneurial spirit is finally starting to take off as Japan is now sharing the NCS system with other countries. With many NATO countries recognizing Japan and its capabilities, the company triumphantly works forwards their mission to further the development and strengthening of the nation's future. "This time, The APAC Entrepreneur has recommended me and introduced my achievements to many of their magazine audiences, now I hope to see the similar changes of my country on to other Asian countries as well," concludes Hattori. ■

