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MANAGEMENT • INVESTMENT • ECONOMICS • ENTREPRENEURSHIP • TECHNOLOGY

Mengapa Pelaburan Emas Menjadi Pilihan?

Telur Mana Telur?

An Affair of Online Learning and Covid-19

Pembasmian Kemiskinan Dalam RMK Ke-12

Bukit Harimau Menangis
Tarikan Pendakian di Kemaman

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Introduction of a Japanese book

'THE MEANING N

If we find 3 CHANCES and note each ME
day, we can see our direction.

Takuya Tsukamoto,
Tokyo, Japan.

OTE'

ANING every

Introduction

This article brings you a book from Japan. The book is called 'THE MEANING NOTE' (Ref. 1). We can find the following phrase on the cover of the book (Figure 1). "This book is the world's first book on how to catch chances", and "If we find 3 CHANCES and note each MEANING every day, we can see our direction".

Well, what do you think? Don't you think that this book is a bit suspicious? I was skeptical when I started trying out the 'MEANING NOTE'method. On the contrary, I remember starting this method with more than 80% doubt. However, time flies. When I started writing the 'MEANING NOTE', I realised half a year had already passed. A community called the 'MEANING NOTE PARTY' has been established in my company, to which I belong to, and around 20 members share their reflections with each other every week.

I believe that if we make good use of the 'MEANING NOTE' method, we can live our lives with more happiness, because the 'MEANING NOTE' is full of hints to livea life better even in today's fast-changing world. Unfortunately, the book is only available in Japanese. Therefore, I would be happy if I could take this opportunity to introduce it to you.
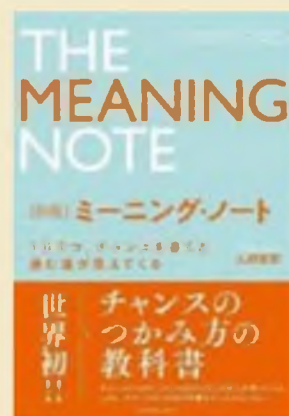
Figure 1. THE MEANING NOTE (Japanese book)

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What is MEANING NOTE?

What is the 'MEANING NOTE'? It is a method of reflection. To put it simple, it may be called a kind of diary. However, it is not just a diary. It is a diary to avoid leaving daily chances behind.
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So what are the chances? In the 'MEANING NOTE', all events or happenings around us are considered as chances, and they are classified into three categories (Figure 2).

The first one is a 'Kirakira'chance. KiraKira means 'sparkling' or 'shiny' in Japanese. The sparkling chance is an event that is positive and has a great emotional impact, such as when a dream comes true or when you get a promotion.

The second one is 'Spicy'chance. This is a negative thing happening to you. The third one is 'Warashibe' chance. Here, 'Warashibe'means straw or something of small worth or insignificance. This represents chances that usually seem worthless or are easily overlooked. In other words, in the 'MEANING NOTE'we consider every event or happening to be 'CHANCE'in some way.
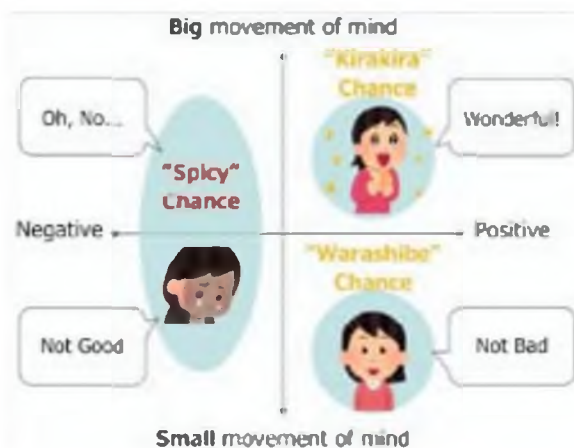

Figure 2. Three chances in our daily lives

So, how exactly should we write the 'MEANING NOTE'? First, we write three sets of'chances'(i.e., synonymous with events/ happenings) and a set of 'MEANINGs'

about what happened each day. Here, we choose 'MEANING'from the following five options: (1) awareness, (2) learning, (3) decision, (4) good thing, and (5) hunch. Then, we write what the CHANCE means to us. If there are any connections between the chances, we connect them with a line (Figure 3).
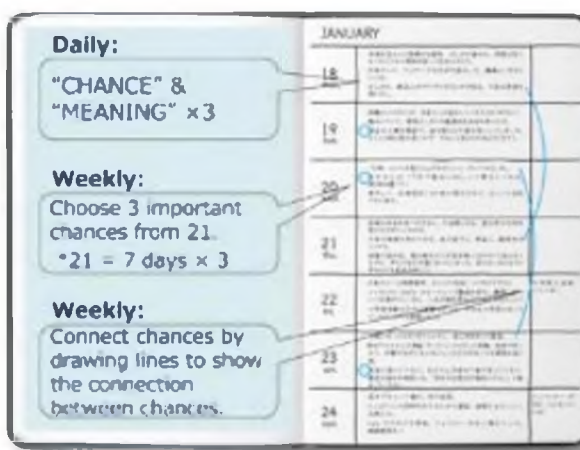

Figure 3. Basic daily/weekly action in THE MEANING NOTE method

Next, we have a weekly and monthly activity to do, which is to choose 3 out of the 21 chances we wrote down and mark the three that are important to us. In a normal diary, we would not look back at what we have written so often. However, in the 'MEANING NOTE', we try not to miss any chances. Therefore, we repeatedly write, look back, and find the connections between the chances.

Example of the MEANING NOTE: How to write?
I know it is hard to imagine how exactly to write notes, so,I would like to share one of my spicy chances with you.

#Example of CHANCE (Spicy):
One holiday morning, I woke up and spent an hour just looking at YouTube or social-networking sites like Twitter and Facebook. I didn't feel good because I felt like there was nothing to gain.

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#Example of MEANING:
I realised that I had to set my phone to the airplane mode. Not only did I put it to the airplane mode, I made a routine to reflect on yesterday and planned for the day every morning. Furthermore, a couple of months later, I realised that doing activities with my friends would help me get into the habit of waking up early, so I began a habit of doing mindfulness yoga with my friends in the morning first. These days, I start every day with a refreshed mind.

"MEANING NOTE" has allowed me to notice small happenings that if I were to summarise the day, they would not be included in the summary. I also really like the positive feelings that we can learn something from the negative happenings.

Other reflection methods in my experience
In this chapter, I will introduce some of the reflection methods that I have worked with. Specifically, I will cover the Experiential Learning Model and KPT (Keep, Problem, Try) method that I used as a college and graduate student.

#1: Experiential Learning Theory vs MEANING NOTE
First, I used Kolb's Experiential Learning Model (Ref. 2) as a reflection on my research activities. In this method, I reflect on the experiences I have had and write down my observations from the experiences.

A distinctive feature of this method is the Abstract Conceptualisation phase. In this phase, the observations are conceptualised in such a way that they can be applied to other situations or in other fields. In other words, the process is to turn the realisation into a lesson, try it out in practice, and then repeat the cycle (Figure 4).
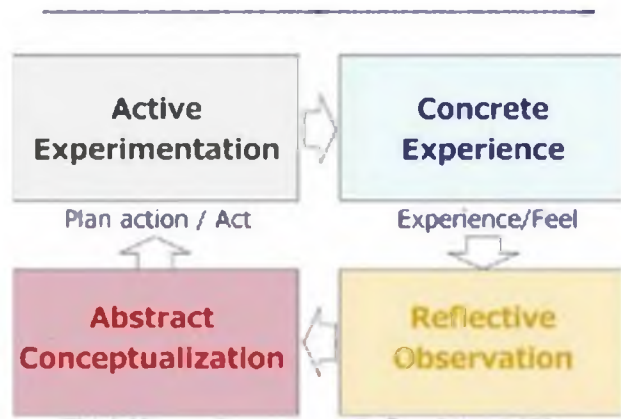

Figure 4. Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory

For example, suppose that a company has experienced losses in a TV business for many years (Concrete Experience). Then, it looks back and is aware that pursuing sales numbers will generate sales but not profits (Reflective Observation).

Next, the company learns by conceptualisation that it can make a profit by focusing on the target market and providing high value-added products that differentiate itself from other companies' products without chasing sales size (Abstract Conceptualisation). Then, actual experimentation takes place (Active Experimentation).

The advantage of this experiential learning model is that it maximises the amount that can be learned from an individual experience. We can use it both in teams and individually. Since a 'conceptualisation' phase is required each cycle, we can always consider how the current experience can be applied to something else.
One disadvantage is that it can be time-consuming and difficult to keep the cycle going if we try to use this cycle to write about more than one experience.

#2: KPT vs MEANING NOTE
Next is the KPT, one of the methods of reflection for software agile development (Ref. 3), where the KPT stands for Keep, Problem, Try.

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In KPT, good things (Keep) and things that need improvement (Problem) are placed on the left side. On the right side, we write how to improve what was good or how to improve what was not good, which is How to Try (Figure 5).
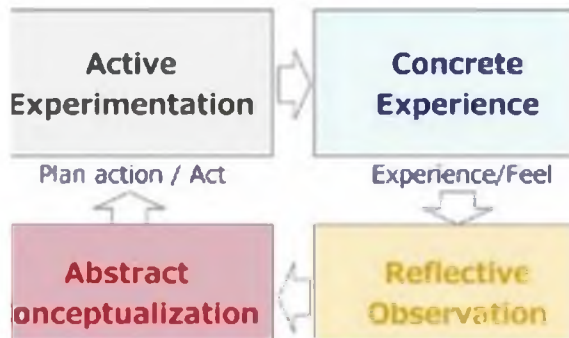

Figure 5. KPT Method

The KPT is simple and makes it easier for teams to work together on improvement activities. From my personal experience, I believe that team strength can be enhanced through the reflection activities as the team members all discuss the issues together during the process. I recommend it when a team has a clear objective and continues improvement activities toward its goal.

So, what if the KPT is used for individual reflections? This is not a bad idea; however, the problem is that we tend to reflect on things in two polarised ways: the good and the bad. Finally, it can be difficult to look back on small events and happiness because the mind is focused only on the big happenings.

Summary of the reflection methods and the essence
I have introduced two methods above, and I will summarise them here. First, of course, no method can be magic. In other words, we cannot change what has happened.

However, we can decide what we should learn from our experiences and what we discover from them. The experiential learning model and the KPT method do not change the happenings, but the essential point is what we can learn from them. Therefore, I understood that the essence of "making MEANING," as mentioned in the "MEANING NOTE," must be important in all the methods.

So, why did the "MEANING NOTE" do better than the experiential learning model and the KPT method? I would like to make the following three points.

The first good thing is that we can write down either relatively small happiness or small awareness. Since we write three chances every day, we will include small happenings in them, and we will not miss those small chances easily.

The second good thing is that it is easy to learn from negative experiences. The phrase "spicy chance" sounds positive, so even if something negative depresses you, you can look for something to learn or something new to discover in it. As a result, we are able to accept and overcome the negative happenings.

The third good thing is that it makes us aware of connections with chances and people. In the MEANING NOTE, there are plenty of opportunities to look back over what we have written and consider the connections we have already made. This gives us a chance to think about how the chances in the past have been connected, and how they can be connected in the future.

Conclusion
Writing a "MEANING NOTE" has helped me discover chances I had missed before and make those connections visible. Everyday I notice and appreciate the small chances that I have.

I would like to note one thing: motivation to keep up the "MEANING NOTE". If we set a goal to achieve something by writing a "MEANING NOTE," it will be hard to continue. What is important is to sustain it

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for a long period of time.

From my image, there is something in the center of my mind that I want to do, and my daily chances and meanings revolve around that goal (Figure 6). Even if I achieve some goal, I do not take it as a goal. I will keep walking with "MEANING NOTE" toward what I want to do, so that I can make myself and the people around me happy first.

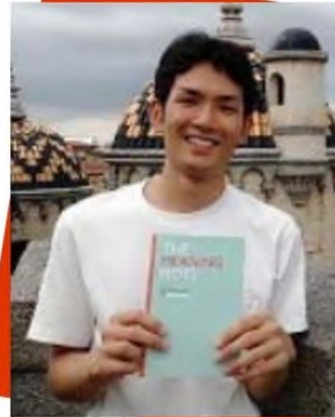Figure 6. Goal-Oriented and Process-Oriented style

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Biography

Takuya Tsukamoto (Japanese) completed his postgraduate studies at Gunma University (Division of Mechanical Science and Technology) in 2017; Now engaged in the ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) software application implementation as a current job.

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