CERTIPORT®
A PEARSON VUE BUSINESS

sojitz
New way, New value

SOJITZ CORPORATION

LOCATION:
Japan

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN PROGRAM:
60 per year

SUCCESS METRICS:
» Training for new hires
» Validates industry-standard technology skills
» Increases productivity on the job

Sojitz Corporation Trains New Recruits with Microsoft Office Specialist Certification

Success Story

www.certiport.com/mos

"Word and Excel skills are required for working in any department. There have been many instances that I appreciated having studied and acquired the certification before I started working."

Mr. Shogo Miyamoto
MOS Excel-certified member
Human Resources & General Affairs Department

Microsoft
Office Specialist

One of the largest trading firms in Japan requires certification to prepare new hires for job duties

INTRODUCTION

Sojitz Corporation is a trading corporation based in Tokyo, Japan, formed in 2003 after a merger of two long-established companies, Nichimen Corporation and Nissho Iwai Corporation. Under its slogan "New Way, New Value," the company's global presence is evident in a broad array of industries, and it is constantly ranked among the most popular employers among university students.

Japanese companies make official job offers to students several months before they graduate, and in some cases give preparatory trainings before they begin employment. At a large trading company like Sojitz, new employees in any department are typically given tasks such as organizing documents and handling statistics. Proficiency in productivity applications is a prerequisite for these new employees so they can focus on their new jobs instead of how to use technology tools. As a result, Sojitz aims to train new recruits on basic business and technology tools before they start on the job.

IMPLEMENTING CERTIFICATION

Sojitz adopted the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) certification program in 2009 to train newly hired clerical staff with the help of Odyssey Communications, Inc. (OCI), Certiport's Platinum Elite Solution Provider in Japan. MOS is one of the most popular IT end-user certification programs in Japan, with a cumulative total of over 3.2 million certification candidates to date. The MOS program provides individuals with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to productively use Microsoft Office on the job.

> *"Studying for MOS certification allows the new recruits to understand what baseline skills they are expected to have in the office so they can prepare themselves accordingly. We also hope the MOS training opportunity further motivates our new employees to build up their computing skills."*
>
> **Mr. Shogo Miyamoto**
> *MOS Excel-certified member*
> *Human Resources & General Affairs Department*

In its first year, Sojitz made MOS exams optional for new clerical hires and offered two-day group training sessions on Word and Excel. Approximately 80 percent of trainees chose to take the exams and all of them passed.

"We implemented the training and certification for prospective employees to help reduce their anxiety so they could join us with confidence," said a former member of the Sojitz Human Resources & General Affairs Department. "Studying for MOS certification allows the new recruits to understand what baseline skills they are expected to have in the office so they can prepare themselves accordingly. We also

hope the MOS training opportunity further motivates our new employees to build up their computing skills."

In 2010, Sojitz decided to extend the MOS training to all new recruits, covering not only clerical but also professional staff.

One of the reasons for expanding the program was the employee's own experience taking the MOS Excel exam. "I learned many new ways to use Excel, and realized that there were so many tasks I could do more easily with those techniques. For example, if I can quickly create tables for a proposal document, I can spend more time planning how to present the proposal to my customer. That is why I suggested offering MOS training opportunities to all new Sojitz employees."

REFINING THE SOLUTION

Unlike the classroom-style training in the previous year, Sojitz adopted a self-learning style in 2010, and the outcome has been promising.

"We thought self-learning training would work well since the skill levels vary among the new recruits. In addition, motivating the trainees is the key to successful learning, and with the self-learning style the trainees can control the pace and approach for learning."

New recruits are provided with MOS official courseware and exam vouchers in October, and they are required to take the MOS Excel exam before they join the company the following April. Those who already have Excel certification can take the PowerPoint exam instead. By March more than 90% of the trainees are successfully certified.

RESULTS

Today approximately 60 new recruits are subject to the MOS training program each year, and more than 200 Sojitz employees have become MOS-certified in total. Each year at the ceremony held for new recruits, OCI provides guidance to support the training program.

As a proponent of the MOS program, Sojitz has worked with OCI on several

MOS advertisements, one of which highlighted Mr. Shogo Miyamoto, who is an MOS Excel-certified member of the Human Resources & General Affairs Department.

"Word and Excel skills are required for working in any department," said Mr. Miyamoto. "There have been many instances that I appreciated having studied and acquired the certification before I started working."

ABOUT CERTIPORT

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