



Koji Nagai

Keidanren *Women's Executive Network*Leadership
Mentor
ProgramThe Determination to
Face Criticism and
Embrace Solitude

Keidanren Women's Executive Network

Leadership Mentor Program Vol.33

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Nomura's Talent Strategy

Nomura traces its roots back to 1872, when a moneychanger, Nomura Shoten, was founded in Osaka. A hundred years ago, in 1925, the securities department of Osaka Nomura Bank (founded in 1917) was spun off to form Nomura Securities. Nomura entered the Tokyo market as a latecomer.

The firm adopted the "Keeping Young" strategy, which was unconventional approach at the time, emphasizing meritocracy and actively promoting young talent. The essence of Keeping Young lies not only in the efforts of those selected, but also in building relationships where others are motivated to support them. Those promoted have a responsibility to demonstrate attitudes and behaviors that encourage others to willingly offer their cooperation, which represents the foundation of Nomura's approach to talent development. Today, regardless of age, nationality, or background, promotions are offered strictly based on ability and performance, with diversity serving as a key driver of growth.

My Approach to Leadership

Amidst structural reform of modern society, the next generation of leaders are required to have not just management experience, but true leadership with a wide perspective and a long-term, forward-looking view. Leadership in business differs from the "captaincy" during school days, and there are various types of leadership styles individuals can adapt. Through my experience at Nomura, I learned

that while autocratic leadership may work in homogeneous groups, leaders in diversified organization must persuade others with both logic and passion. One memorable experience was from union chair days, when I took an initiative to implement a strategy for female part-time workers to join the union. Despite strong opposition, I stayed committed to my convictions, continued patient persuasion, and ultimately secured agreement. This valuable experience taught me that the leader's ultimate mission is not to chase short-term gains, but to act with strong conviction and a broad perspective while taking responsibility for the team's sustained growth.

See It Through,
Even If You Are Standing Alone

Leaders must have the insight to recognize the direction of the times, a broad perspective, and the determination to make difficult decisions without letting any personal feelings interfere. In the workplace where diversity and inclusion are appreciated, the ability to explain decisions logically is essential, and leaders have a duty to explain his decision and persuade others with passion continuously. To manage a large organization, it is vital to stay humble in normal times while taking the lead in times of crisis. Leaders should also be highly aware of how their appearance, actions and behaviors are perceived by others. Above all, the willingness to face criticism, embrace solitude, and perseverance are crucial aspects of effective leadership.

I hope next generation of leaders will never give up even when facing difficulties, and to move forward with strength, in order to build a better tomorrow and make your dream come true in the future.

Mentor Profile

Koji Nagai

Vice Chair, Keidanren
Chairman of the
Board of Directors,
Nomura Holdings, Inc. /
Nomura Securities Co., Ltd.

Born in Tokyo in 1959, Mr. Nagai joined Nomura in 1981 after graduating from the Faculty of Law at Chuo University. Following appointments as Branch Manager of several branch offices and General Manager of departments within Investment Banking Division, he was appointed Director in 2003 and then Executive Managing Director in 2007. He became Head of Investment Banking, Japan in 2010 and then Co-COO and Deputy President in 2011. Mr. Nagai served as Group CEO of Nomura from August 2012 to March 2020. He is currently Chairman of the Board of Nomura, and he also serves as Vice Chair of Keidanren since 2022.

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