



F86Fジェット戦闘機「セイバー」

パイロット断念「娑婆」で再スタート

「すしざんまい」喜代村社長 木村 清 (70) Ⅱ

「航空自衛隊に入隊して4年。戦闘機パイロットになる夢を捨て、地上勤務をしながらも訓練は欠かさなかった。それがランニング中にトラックの荷台から崩れ落ちた落下物が頭に当たり、入院する大けがを負ってしまった。」

事故から1週間ほど入院して頭のがけは回復したのですが、退院後は何か様子が違う。日常生活に支障はなかったんですが、わずかの瞬間、ぼやけてしまっている。戦闘機パイロットに影響が出るのでは。不安がよぎりました。降りかかった不運を嘆きましたが、夢を諦めるわけにはいきません。周囲にバレないよう、普段通りに勤務しながら訓練も続けていました。

ところがある日、医務官から「木村、あの事故の後に何か体に異変はないのか。目がちやんと通うぞ」と言われた。さらに「精密検査を受けてこい」。検査結果は残酷なものでした。頭を負傷した影響で眼球の調整機能が少し低下している。そして告げられたのは、ヘリコプターや旅客機ならいいが、極度のG圧がかかる戦闘機の操縦は無理だ、との診断でした。

3歳のときに父親の葬儀で真つ赤な戦闘機F86セイバーを自撃して以来、幾度もくじけそうになりながら追求めてきた戦闘機パイロットです。しかし、断念せざるを得ない現実が突き付けられた。これからどうしたらいいのか。ヘリコプターも魅力はあるが、やはり違う。このまま地上勤務で自衛隊に残るか。それとも退官してまったく知らない世界で人生をやり直そうか。

自衛官は自分が退官すること。「娑婆に出る」と表現します。刑務所から刑期を終えて出所した刑法犯に例えたもので、それだけ訓練は過酷で、外部の方々と交流はほとんどない。かなり迷った末、私が選んだのは娑婆でした。「娑婆」には戦闘機パイロットに代わる、自分の情熱をぶつけられる夢があるのではないかと、確信はないままの決断でした。

入隊から5年9カ月がたっていました。真つ赤なセイバーに魅せられ、戦闘機パイロットになるために突っ走ってきた人生はもう終わりです。さて、再スタートは何をしようか。娑婆の知り合いといえは親族のみで、あてなどまったくありませんでした。

《暗黒模索で始まった第二の人生》

退官したときの貯蓄は、給料と利息などで68万円でした。まず向かったのは証券会社です。少しでも多く手元の資金を増やしたいとの思いで、投資先として自分で狙いを定めた会社がありました。株価はちょうど680円で、きりがいい。支店の窓口で対応してくれた担当者に「この会社の株を68万円でお願ひします。そうしてなせかかげんな顔です。そして「この会社の株はお勧めできませんね。お昼どきなので、一緒にラーメンでもどうですか」と誘ってくれた。『そうか。やはり見通しが甘かったのか』と思いつつ、『ごちそうになったことを覚えています』。

ところが食べ終わって支店に戻ると、株価は710円に上がっている。釈然としない私に、担当者は「木村さん、すごいね。よく勉強しているね」と手のひらを返すではありません。結局、予定より少ない株券を購入することになりました。そして2カ月後、株価はさらに上がって2750円です。その時に売却して、手持ちのお金は2550万円を超えました。

この出来事は新鮮でした。自衛隊では1千回連続で腕立て伏せを命じられ、できなかったら罰としてほかの仲間全員もやり直さなければならぬ。それが客さんの思いを否定し、それが間違っても責任はとらなくていい。そうか、「娑婆」とはそういうところなんだ。人生の再スタートはそんな体験から始まりました。(聞き手 大野正利)

話の肖像画

Portrait of the story

Abandoning Dream to Become a Pilot and Starting Again in the Free World

sushizanmai
KIYOMURA Corp.

President
KIYOSHI KIMURA (70) Ⅱ

《4 years into the service in the Japan Air Self-Defense Force. Remaining hopeful about the dream of becoming a fighter pilot, continuing to train while tending to ground crew work. One time, when out on a run, a serious head injury caused by an object falling from a cargo truck required hospitalization.》

Although the head injury healed and I recovered after a week at the hospital, still, something seemed odd after I got out. There was nothing impacting my usual routine in particular, but every once in a while my eyesight blurred momentarily. That was when I started worrying about my career as a fighter pilot. I could have blamed and cried about my misfortune, but I couldn't let that get in the way of my dream. No one knew about this, and I also continued training while I worked as usual.

One day, a medical officer asked, whether or not I experienced any irregularities with my body after that

accident. "Your eyes look a little odd," he said. I was ordered to get a complete physical. Long story short, the worst possible results came back. Due to the damage that my head had suffered, my eye's ability to focus had worsened. As a result, the final diagnosis was that although I could still pilot a helicopter or a commercial airline, piloting a fighter jet with extreme levels of acceleration was completely out of the question.

This was my dream since I witnessed that bright red F-86 Sabre fighter jet at my father's funeral. This was something I continued to pursue despite almost giving up many times. But I was now hit with the reality that I had to abandon my dream. I was at a loss of ideas on how to continue. Piloting a helicopter has its charm, but it's different. I could remain in the Japan Self-Defense Force and work as ground crew. Or, I could retire from service and start my life over in another completely different field.

Members of the Self-Defense Force often equate retirement from service as "going back to reality." This was a metaphor to say it was like being released from prison after a long time inside. This was due to the similarities of both like the brutal training and having no interactions with the outside world. After going back and forth, I finally decided to return back to "reality." Maybe there was something in reality that was just as much rewarding as it was to become a fighter pilot. I wasn't certain, but I knew I had to make a choice.

Already 5 years and 9 months have passed since I entered service. After being fascinated by the bright red Sabre on that fateful day, my pursuit of becoming a fighter pilot was now coming to a close. Now what? How do I restart my life? My only link back in reality was just my family and no one else.

《Searching in the Dark for a New Life.》

After retiring, I had 680,000 yen in savings from my pay, and interest. The first place I visited was a stock company. I wanted to find a way to increase the money I owned, even if it was just for a small amount.

I did have a company in mind that I wanted to invest in. The price per share was 680 JPY, just the right amount. But when I went to a branch of this stock company in order to purchase their shares in the amount of 680,000 yen, the person at the counter questioned my choice. The person said they did not recommend this purchase, but instead asked if I wanted to join them for ramen, since it was just time for lunch. I figured that the outlook of my purchase was bad, and I happily enjoyed the meal.

But when we got back to the branch office, the share prices had risen to 710 JPY. Although I was perplexed, the person in charge had by this time changed his attitude and congratulated me on how well I studied the market. In the end, I purchased fewer shares than

initially anticipated. But after 2 months, the share price went even further up to 2750 JPY. That was when I sold, and ended up with 2.5 million yen in my pocket.

Overall, it was an eye-opening experience. If I was ordered to do a thousand push-ups in the Japan Self-Defense Force, and failed, my entire team had to do it all over again as punishment. But here, there was no punishment. Even if you advised against a customer's wish, and you were proven wrong. That's when I realized what "reality" was like. And that was the beginning of my second life.

[Interviewer: Masatoshi Ono]

[Photo caption]
F-86F Sabre Fighter Jet

新たな道を示した「100万円の見栄」

「すしざんまい」^{きむら きよし} 木村 清 (70) 氏
喜代村社長



会社員時代

話の
肖像画

《事故で戦闘機パイロットへの夢が破れ、15歳で入った航空自衛隊を5年9カ月で退官、新たな社会に飛び込んだ》

航空自衛隊第4術科学校生徒隊は埼玉県熊谷市にありまし。生徒隊を4年で卒業して基地勤務となつてからは、仕事で県内の人間基地などに行き。そこでも自に林のは、熊谷から飯能にかけて立するモーテルです。もうかっているんだろ。とりあえずは、この世界に飛び込んでみようかと決めました。

つてをたどってモーテルの経営者に会い、採用してもらいました。自衛隊出身なのでベッドメイクや清掃、洗濯はお手のもので面倒なエアコンやボイラーなどの修理も手早くできます。自衛隊時代の厳しい訓練に比べれば、苦にもなりません。しばらく勤務するうち、経営者にすっかり気に入ってもらえました。

将来、独立する意向の私を思っくれたのでした。ある日、経営者が「木村くん、モーテルの経営をやらな。お金はどれくらい持つてるの」と聞いてきました。手元にあったのは株でもうけた残りの200万円でしたが、とっさに見栄を張って「200万〜300万円です」と答えてしまいました。経営者は満足げにうなずいて、「どうだい、その300万円が僕が最初に建てたモーテルを賈わないか」と提案してくれたのです。

6棟建てたそのモーテルは平日で10万円以上、休日だと20万円近い売り上げがありました。働いていたので利用状況も把握しており、これは絶対にもうかることを確信しました。私の独立を支えてくれたように経営者の気持ちもすくなくあがった。しかし問題は見栄を張った100万円分です。

今であれば銀行に出資してもらつても考えたと思います。しかし自衛官を退官したばかりの20代の若僧に、そんな方は考えもおよびません。見栄を張らなければよかった、と

激しく後悔しましたね。最後は実家に行つて、お父さんにお願するにしました。実家は借金を完済し、多少の余裕があったのです。

いきさつを聞いたおふくろは、「いいよ、100万円は出すよ」と答えてくれた。その代わり、どんなにもうかるつと、今後はもうこの家の敷居をまたがないでおくれ。私はモーテルの経営者にすれば、私にお前を育てたわけじゃない。私の安易な決意をたしなめたのでしよう。私が3歳のときにおやじを交通事故でなくし、寝る間も惜しんで借金をかえしてきたおふくろです。悲しい思いをさせるわけにはいきません。八方ふさがりの状態となり、約束の期日も過ぎてしま。きちんとして断りもできず、モーテルの経営者には義理を欠くことになつてしまいました。

《司法試験を目指す》

おふくろのあのひびきには考えさせられました。モーテルの経営が悪いわけではなく、若いつに何も考えずにもうけに飛びつく姿勢がよくなかったのだではないか。何か大きな目的のためにこれからの人生をかけるべきではないのか。そんなとき、自衛隊時代の先輩から、「今できることを精いっぱいやれよ」との言葉をもらいました。

当時の私に精いっぱいできることは何か。そして何か人の役に立ち、人生をかけるような大きな目的はないか。そこで思いついたのが難関の司法試験です。自衛隊時代に戦闘機パイロットになるために大学入資格検定に合格し、中央大学の通信課程を受講していました。中大といえは司法試験の合格者が多い。よし、戦闘機パイロットに代わつて裁判官か検事、弁護士になつて社会に貢献しよう。そのための方策を考え、毎日生活費10万円、見栄を張った100万円が、人生の方向性を示してくれました。

(聞き手 大野正利)

Portrait of the story

The “One Million Yen Brag” and a New Way Forward

sushizanmai
KIYOMURA Corp.

President
KIYOSHI KIMURA (70)

《I joined the Japan Air Self-Defense Force when I was 15, but after an accident crushed my dreams of becoming a fighter jet pilot, I left after 5 years and 9 months of service. This was when I plunged into a new world.》

The student platoon of the 4th Technical School of Japan Air Self-Defense Force was stationed in Kumagaya City in Saitama prefecture. I graduated from the student platoon in 4 years and started working at the base. Afterwards, I also worked at Iruma Base and other locations in the same prefecture. That was when I noticed many motels lined close together from Kumagaya to Hanno. They must be making a lot of money, I thought. So I decided to give it a try.

I asked around, and after a meeting with one of the motel's manager I was hired. Due to my time in the Japan Self-Defense Force, I was accustomed to making beds and cleaning, as well

as doing the laundry, plus I was quick in taking care of tiresome jobs, like repairing air conditioners and boilers. None of this could even begin to compare to the intense training in the Japan Self-Defense Force. I was soon in the good graces of the owner after working for a while. They probably also imagined I wanted to branch out on my own in the future. One day, the owner asked me if I was interested in managing a motel. Also, they asked how much money I had. Although I only had 2 million yen remaining from the shares I sold, I lied and said that I had about 2 to 3 million. The manager nodded happily, and asked if I wanted to buy the first motel he built for 3 million yen. The six story motel had a revenue of 100,000 yen on weekdays and close to 200,000 yen on holidays. I also spent time working there, so I was convinced it would be a bomb. I was also really thankful to the owner who was trying to support my independence. But the real issue was

me lying about the million yen.

Nowadays, I would have thought of having a bank finance me. But for a 20 year old who just recently retired from the Self-Defense Force, that kind of thought had never occurred, nor would it even be possible. Looking back, I always regret lying. In the end, I went home to my mother and asked her for help. By this time she had paid off the debts and had some extra money.

When she heard about my situation, she said she will give me the million yen, but added, “No matter what happens, succeed or fail, you have no place in this house any more. I did not raise you to be a motel manager.”

It must have been her way of scolding me for my immature decision. This was my mother. She lost her husband when I was three to a traffic accident, my mother, who stayed up night after night to repay the debt. I could not see her cry. At that point, the deadline to make the deal had passed. Not only that, I didn't

even have the decency to properly decline the offer to the motel owner.

《National Bar Examination.》

My mother's words made me rethink everything. Operating a motel wasn't bad, it was just the fact that I was immature and had jumped at the chance of getting rich without thinking. I should have thought of something bigger if I was to risk my life. That was when a senior colleague from the Japan Self-Defense Force said something that pushed me forward. “Now you should do what you can, to the best of your ability!”

So what could I do? To do the best of my ability at that time? And, was there any great purpose, worth risking my life through which I could help others? That was when I came up with the idea of the incredibly difficult National Bar Examination. During my time in the Japan Self-Defense Force I had passed the University Entrance

Qualification Examination and was taking correspondence courses at Chuo University. This university was known for achieving a high score at the National Bar Examination. So instead of being a fighter pilot, I decided right then and there that I would become either a judge, a prosecutor or a lawyer as a way to contribute to the society. So from then on, I started living everyday towards achieving this goal. The million yen lie had shown a new way forward in life.

[Interviewer: Masatoshi Ono]

[Photo caption]
Company Era



会社員時代

訪問販売で学んだ商売の奥深さ

「すしざんまい」
喜代村社長 木村 清 (70) 図

「自衛官を退官した後、人生の目標を司法試験に定めた。合格のための生活が始まった直後、またもや不運が襲った。株でもつづけた200万円を元手に司法試験への勉強を始めたところ、友人から「独立する資金が必要なのでお金を貸してくれ。利子をつけて返すから」と頼まれた。信用していた友人なので、200万円をすべて貸したのです。それが1カ月たち、2カ月たちとも連絡がない。しびれを切らして家に行くと、もぬけの殻でした。持ち逃げです。あの金は返って来るとはならない。悔しかったのですが、現実には変わりません。切り替えて収入の道を探りました。

難関の司法試験に合格するには、大学の授業料に加え、専門書も購入しなければなりません。そこでアルバイトを探しました。そのひとつが百科事典の訪問販売です。寮も完備という新聞広告をみて、すぐ応募しました。固定給は2万7千円ですが、売れば売れば収入は増える歩合制です。やってみると、関心が湧きました。

販売する百科事典は1セット18巻が25万円、地球儀付きだと27万円という高額商品です。どう考えてもなかなか売れるものではない。最初は60軒を回って、みよと団地を回りました。次に裕福そうな一戸建てを訪ねましたが、家の定、まったく売れません。その後はアパートも全戸回ると、120軒、240軒と倍々増えていきました。が、まったくです。電車を借しんで、ヒッチハイクで遠くまで連れていってもらい、そこから寮まで歩いて戻りながら営業を続けました。600軒ほど訪ねましたが、全滅です。取り付く島もない状況でした。

食事は朝晩が寮でインスタンラーメン、昼は公園でコッペパンです。2週間もたつと、栄養の偏りか、精神的なものか、顔や手足がどんどん黄色くなってきました。これでは司法試験の勉強に支障が出る、寮に近

い青果市場で廃棄する「すし野菜」をもらい、ラーメンに入れて食べるようにしました。1カ月もたつと、同じ時期に始めた20人ほどの販売員は次々と辞めていき、残ったのは私とついでに、肌で感じましたね。

《もう諦めよう。そんなときに転機が訪れた》

2カ月たったころでしょうか。その日は東京・吉祥寺方面を回っていたのですが、やはりダメです。お金も底をつき、お昼のコッペパンさえ買つことができず、空腹をかかえて井の頭公園で突然と座っていました。もう無理だ。今日帰ったら辞表を出そう。そもそもこんな高額商品が売れるわけがない。頭の中では次のアルバイトは何をしようとの思いで、売り物の百科事典を眺めていました。

ふと気が付くと、周りに子供たちが集まっていた。そのうちの一人が、「お兄さん、この本は何？」と聞いてきた。子供が買える本ではありません。売る気もなく、ただ興味に答えていたら、興味津々の子供たちは次から次へと質問してくる。毎日毎日、セールストークと司法試験の勉強で、私は飽き飽きしていたのでしょ。子供相手ですが、久しぶりの熱のこもった会話を夢中になりました。

そのうち、母親たちが子供を迎えに来た。見知らぬ若者と子供たちが百科事典を通じて盛り上がり上がっている。私が事典を贈るのを指さし、「これはご両親だよ」と説明すると、母親たちも一緒にうなづいてくれた。そして、そのうち何人かお母さんたちとき、なんとあるお母さんが「すしざんまい」で売ってほしい」と言ってくれた。それはありませんか。信じられない展開でした。次の日、そのお母さんの家に事典を持っていくと、他の子供のお母さんたちが集まっていて、全員が購入してくれました。そこから次々と注文が入り、次から次へと注文が入りました。

それまでは「売ろう」「売ろう」という雰囲気から出ていたのです。しかし商売抜きで子供たちに読んでいた「売ろう」「売ろう」というものを売ってほしいという奥深さを感じました。

(聞き手 大野正利)

話の肖像画

Portrait of the story

Learning the Complexities of Business Through Door-To-Door Sales

sushizanmai
KIYOMURA Corp.

President
KIYOSHI KIMURA (70) 図

《After retiring from the Self-Defense Force, I set my sight on passing the National Bar Examination. But before I even begun, another case of bad luck struck.》

I just started studying for the National Bar Examination with the 2 million yen I had made from selling shares, when a friend asked me to lend him money to start a business. He even said he will return it with interest. He was a trusted friend of mine and I lent him the entire 2 million I had. But after a month went by and then 2 months, there was no sound from him. I couldn't wait any longer, so I went to his house. And found it empty. He took off with the money. I realized that that money was never coming back. As much as I was angry, there was nothing I could do. I had to pivot and find a way to make a living.

To pass the incredibly difficult National Bar Examination, not only I needed money for tuition, I also needed money to buy specialized textbooks. I

had to look for part-time work. One of which turned out to be door-to-door sales of encyclopedia. When I saw in the newspaper add that they also offer dormitory stay, I immediately applied for the job. Fixed salary was 27,000 JPY, but it was commission-based, meaning the more I sold, the more I would make. That really lit a fire in me.

The encyclopedia was expensive. At 250,000 JPY it consisted of 116 volumes, and I could also add a globe model of earth for another 70,000 JPY. This was not something that could be sold easily. At first I started rotating with 60 households in a housing complex. Next, I started visiting single-family homes, but to no avail. Later I went door-to-door at apartment complexes, increasing the visited households from 120 to 240. But again, no success. I even hitchhiked far away to save on train fees and tried to make a sale while walking back to the dorm. I ended up visiting 600 households but made absolutely nothing. I was an island

in the middle of nowhere.

Every morning and evening I had instant noodles at the dorm and a roll of bread for lunch at a park somewhere. After 2 weeks my face and limbs started taking on a yellowish color probably due to either malnutrition, mental strain, or both. This would have negatively affected my chances with the National Bar Examination, so I asked around for some vegetable scraps at a market near the dorm to add to my noodles. After a month, the 20 or so fellow salesmen that started at the same time began quitting one after another, until me and just one other were left. This really hit home at how difficult sales could be.

《I was about to quit. But then, opportunity came along.》

It must have been after around two months have passed. I was making the rounds in Kichijoji area in Tokyo, but -- again -- I had nothing. By then I had no money and couldn't even afford a roll

of bread. I just sat there in Inokashira Park, hungry and completely numb. I couldn't do it anymore. I decided to quit after returning home that day. There was no chance that someone would buy something expensive like this. At this point my head was already thinking of what work I should take on next, and I was staring at the encyclopedia.

That's when I noticed that a group of children had gathered around me. One of them asked what the book was. Obviously, this was not something they could afford. So I just simply answered whatever questions and curiosities they had. I had no intention of selling, and the questions piled on. I must have been pretty stressed out from all the salesmen talk and studying I was doing for the National Bar Examination. I was actually having fun talking to the kids after such a long while. Later, the mothers came to take their children home. They saw their children talking excitedly with some stranger over encyclopedia. When I was pointing to

the pages of the encyclopedia and explaining, they were nodding along as well. When I got up to leave, something strange happened. One of the mothers said she was fascinated by the encyclopedia and asked to buy it. The turn of events was quite unbelievable. The next day when I brought the encyclopedia to their home, the other mothers were there, and they all purchased the product. From there, word of mouth spread, and I had orders coming in one after another.

Before all of this, I must have been too much of a "salesman" and made people turn away. But when I talked to the kids without any intention of selling, that in itself made the sale happen. I never knew how deep and complex sales could be until that moment.

[Interviewer: Masatoshi Ono]

[Photo caption]
Company Era

職安で紹介された「マグロ大王」への道

「すしさんまい」
喜代村社長 木村 清 (70) 図

「司法試験の勉強のための資金を得るために始めた百科事典の訪問販売で、買ってもらったの心構えに気付いた」

訪問販売していた百科事典は1セット18巻が25万円で、最初は全く注文が取れませんでした。「こんな高いものを誰が買うんだ」と諦め、商売っ気なしに子供たちに読み聞かせていたところ、その姿を見てあるお母さんが購入を決意してくれました。その翌日には周りのお母さんたちも注文です。わが子と思っ母親の気持ちに心打たれました。子供のために高額の品を買ったお母さんには、これ以上の喜びはありません。いいものだから買ってくれるだろう、ではなく、お客さんの期待に応えるものを用意して買っていたんです。その後も百科事典の注文は途切れることなく入ってきました。

《水産業界と出会う》

百科事典の販売会社は固定給2万7千円で、あとは売れば売れるだけ収入になる歩合制でした。1カ月半で500巻以上も売って新記録を達成したので、手取りは相当多くなると、と期待していたら、そんなに上がっていない。翌月も上がらない。理由を聞いても、「クリーニングオフがあるから」とか「売り上げはほかの販売員の経費に充てられているから」など、のりくちで説明されるだけでした。こちらは司法試験への準備もある。これでは頑張るかいがないと、別の会社で働くことに決めました。

話の 肖像画

(聞き手 大野正利)

初めて飛び込んだ水産業界は不思議なことだらけでした。例えば当時、小さな切り身は平気で捨てられていたのです。もったいないと思いましたが、「売りたい物にならないから仕方ない」というような雰囲気でした。私はその後、弁当店のおかずや小売店のすしネタ用に、販路を開拓し、安価で売ることができました。お客さんが安くお買いしい魚を食べることができれば、幸せを届けることができます。その一心で、創意工夫をするようにしたのです。水産業界の不思議な常識へ、挑戦する日々が始まりました。

《水産業界の常識に面食らった》

あつとき職安で新洋商事を紹介されたら、別の会社を選んでいたら、私は「マグロ大王」にならなかつたであろう。初めはアルバイトで入社したが、がよもやその日から50年近く、水産業界とかかわっていくことになることは夢にも思いませんでした。

「高額の品を買ったお母さんには、これ以上の喜びはありません。いいものだから買ってくれるだろう、ではなく、お客さんの期待に応えるものを用意して買っていたんです。その後も百科事典の注文は途切れることなく入ってきました。」

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東京・築地市場に卸されたマグロ

Portrait of the story

The Road to Becoming the Tuna King Shown by the Job Center

sushizanmai
KIYOMURA Corp.

President
KIYOSHI KIMURA (70) 14

《I began door-to-door sales of encyclopedias as a way to make money to study for the National Bar Examination. This experience taught me the mental aspect of sales.》

A set of the encyclopedias I was trying to sell costed 250,000 JPY, and I did not make any sales in the beginning. It was only when I gave up on trying to sell such an expensive item and instead just started telling and showing the encyclopedia to the kids. That's when their mothers decided to purchase them. The following day, the other mothers ordered as well. I was struck at how much the mothers cared for their children. No matter the expense, they willingly gave their money away for their children.

Instead of giving up because something was expensive, I should have looked elsewhere to understand what customers actually wanted. Once

I could understand that, then I could propose a product for them to purchase. And there could be no better joy than to know that the purchase would be useful for them. Instead of thinking simply that a good product would lead to sales, I should propose something that meets the expectations of the customers. Even after that I continuously received orders for encyclopedias.

《Encounter With the Fishery Industry.》

My fixed salary at the encyclopedia selling company was 27,000 JPY, but was commission-based, so the more I sold, the more I made. I was able to reach a new record of over 500 volumes sold in a month and a half, so I expected an increase in my pay. However, I only received a small bump in my salary. Nothing happened next month either. When asking for explanation, all I got was that some

customers returned the products, or that the revenue I made was used to cover the expenses of other salesmen. There simply was no proper explanation for this. I also had to prepare for the National Bar Examination. There was no incentive to work hard here. That's when I decided to change jobs.

So I visited an Employment Placement agency. Looking for a job with good benefits and conditions. I was shown ads for several job positions, and it was on that list, that I found Shinyo Shoji, a subsidiary of Taiyo Fishery Ltd. (present Maruha Nichiro Corporation). So, the fishery industry... The idea stirred up memories of the poor childhood, the tasty tuna my mother had brought home from a funeral, and the joy I brought to everyone when catching fish like carp from rivers and swamps. In my memories, a piece of fish on the dinner table was a sign of a happy family. The thought of delivering

happiness to people sealed the deal. Without further ado, I requested the agency to grant me a meeting with Shinyo Shoji.

Now that I think about it, if I wasn't introduced to Shinyo Shoji at that time by the agency and had chosen another company, I would have not become the Tuna King. In the beginning I started working there part-time, and I never could have dreamed that I would still be in the fishery industry almost 50 years later.

《Surprised and Confused by the Customs of the Fishery Industry.》

When I first plunged into the fishery industry, I was immediately hit with how different it was. At the time, small cuts of fish were often discarded, to give just one example. Although I thought this was wasteful, the industry as a whole had the attitude that "if it can't sell, why bother." Later, I found a new market

for these pieces. I sold them at reasonable prices to lunch box shops and sushi shops. I felt that offering tasty fish at reasonable price would make the customers happy. That was the mindset, as I tried being more creative in everything I did. Thus began the days of challenging the strange customs prevalent in the fishery industry.

[Interviewer: Masatoshi Ono]

[Photo caption]
Wholesale Tuna at Tokyo's Tsukiji Market

水産業界に夢中、司法試験は断念

「すしざんまい」
喜代村社長 木村 清 (70) 画

《昭和49年、司法試験の資金を稼ぐために大洋漁業(現マルハニチロ)の関連会社「新洋商事」で働き始めた。水産業界の常識を打ち破る日々が始まった》

《冷凍食品も扱った》

私はかつて当時の水産業界は不思議なところがありました。例えばタコは足が8本そろっていません。商品価値がない。と安価で販売されていたのです。これを「スライス」してすしネタにしよう。と買い取り、すし店に売り込んだ。売れましたね。また和洋中の食材として人気のモンゴウイカですが、耳は不要とされて捨てられており、しかも処分には費用がかかっていた。何か用途はないか。と思いついた。さうすり身にして竹輪に練り込んだらいいのでは、とひらめいた。そこで水産加工業者に安価で卸したところ、評判となり、注文がひっきりなしに届くようになった。大量在庫で困っていたスナウワタラを買取って白身フライにして売ったところ、これもお惣菜として人気商品になり、休みを返上して日曜市で売ったりしました。初めて触れた水産業界はとにかく楽しかった。「すしざんまい」にお客さんに喜んでもらえるかと考えていると、これまでにならぬやり方が次々次々と浮かんでくる。目の前のお客さんには要らないと捨てられていた魚が、ほかのお客さんにはありがたいと買っていく。夢中になりましたね。

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《昭和49年、司法試験の資金を稼ぐために大洋漁業(現マルハニチロ)の関連会社「新洋商事」で働き始めた。水産業界の常識を打ち破る日々が始まった》

私にとって当時の水産業界は不思議なところがありました。例えばタコは足が8本そろっていません。商品価値がない。と安価で販売されていたのです。これを「スライス」してすしネタにしよう。と買い取り、すし店に売り込んだ。売れましたね。また和洋中の食材として人気のモンゴウイカですが、耳は不要とされて捨てられており、しかも処分には費用がかかっていた。何か用途はないか。と思いついた。さうすり身にして竹輪に練り込んだらいいのでは、とひらめいた。そこで水産加工業者に安価で卸したところ、評判となり、注文がひっきりなしに届くようになった。大量在庫で困っていたスナウワタラを買取って白身フライにして売ったところ、これもお惣菜として人気商品になり、休みを返上して日曜市で売ったりしました。初めて触れた水産業界はとにかく楽しかった。「すしざんまい」にお客さんに喜んでもらえるかと考えていると、これまでにならぬやり方が次々次々と浮かんでくる。目の前のお客さんには要らないと捨てられていた魚が、ほかのお客さんにはありがたいと買っていく。夢中になりましたね。



東京・築地市場

話の
肖像画

ならない。これでは倉庫の保管料もかかってくる。そこで倉庫を借りてピアガーデン風にしてストローを並べ、ビールをどんどん飲んでもらう。そこに枝豆を出す。これを提案しました。在庫はこれでは、枝豆は冬でも売れるようになりまし。この成功でお店の経営にも興味をわき、大規模な居酒屋を提案したこともあります。当時はさきまな、ニューを出す居酒屋は「養老力」くらいで、ほとんどの居酒屋が焼き鳥や鍋など少ないメニューで、ごんまりと経営していました。そこで大きなお店でメニューを多彩にしてお客さんをたくさん呼び、ここに会社で扱う冷凍食品を卸すことにしたのです。何でも出して、現在の大型居酒屋の走りですね。

とにかく新しい挑戦が面白く、それが成功して売上げが伸びていく。つねにアイデアを模索する日々となりました。その半面、目標である司法試験の勉強に割く時間がたんと減っていった。当時は中央大学法学部の通信課程で大学に通いながら、司法試験の勉強も続けたのです。

このまま勉強を続けて法曹界に飛び込んで勝負すべきか、商売を続けていくか。迷って大学の担当教授に相談に行きまし。君は起業家として、弁護士を使ってくれた方がいい。教授の答えは明確で、これで決意は固まりました。司法試験は断念しましたが、大学の通信課程は続け、7年かけて卒業しました。

アルバイトで入った水産業界でしたが、お客さんのためにアイデアを考え、それを実施する。とものうけにつながらることが分かった。とてもやりがいがある。こうして商売の世界にいつかのめり込んでいくようになったのです。(聞き手 大野正利)

ならない。これでは倉庫の保管料もかかってくる。そこで倉庫を借りてピアガーデン風にしてストローを並べ、ビールをどんどん飲んでもらう。そこに枝豆を出す。これを提案しました。在庫はこれでは、枝豆は冬でも売れるようになりまし。この成功でお店の経営にも興味をわき、大規模な居酒屋を提案したこともあります。当時はさきまな、ニューを出す居酒屋は「養老力」くらいで、ほとんどの居酒屋が焼き鳥や鍋など少ないメニューで、ごんまりと経営していました。そこで大きなお店でメニューを多彩にしてお客さんをたくさん呼び、ここに会社で扱う冷凍食品を卸すことにしたのです。何でも出して、現在の大型居酒屋の走りですね。

Portrait
of the story

The Road to Becoming the Tuna King Shown by the Job Center

sushizanmai
KIYOMURA Corp.

President
KIYOSHI KIMURA (70) 画

《In 1974, I started working at Shinyo-Shoji, a subsidiary of Taiyo Fishery Ltd. (present Maruha Nichiro Corporation) to pay for my tuition while studying for the National Bar Examination. Thus began the days of breaking the traditions of the fishery industry.》

To me, the fishery industry was full of strange and confusing customs at that time. For example, an octopus without all 8 of its legs was considered to have no market value and sold at a discount. So I purchased them and sliced them into cuts for sushi shops. They sold like hotcakes. Additionally, the cuttlefish was a popular ingredient in Japanese, Western and Chinese cuisines, but its fins were considered unnecessary and thrown away, while even the disposal cost money.

I thought of ways to repurpose it, and came up with the idea of mincing and kneading it into chikuwa. From there I sold them at a reasonable price to a

processing operator, whereupon it became popular and orders started coming in mass. I also purchased a large quantity of Alaska pollock holding inventory, and resold it as fried fish. This too became a popular ready-made dish. I sold it at the market on Sundays, giving up my day off. I was simply having a lot of fun in the fishery industry. Once I started thinking about ways to make customers happy, ideas just simply started popping up in my head one after another. Fish that were considered useless by one customer could be turned into a sales good for another. I became completely immersed.

《Foray Into Frozen Foods.》

It was a period when frozen foods started to appear. I had just started working, and was in charge of selling them as meals to school cafeterias and hospitals, as well as izakaya bars. We

also handled frozen edamame, but since the general public was not familiar with frozen vegetables at that time, it was hard to sell. That's where I set my eyes on beer gardens. This proved effective, but since beer gardens only operated during summer, we had to store the edamame once fall had arrived. This would bring storage costs. That's when I proposed we rent out a warehouse inside lined with stoves, and turn it into a beer garden. This way we were able to sell both, beer and edamame. This solved the storage issue and we were able to sell edamame even during winter. The success of this arose my interest in shop management, and I even proposed an idea for a large-scale izakaya restaurant. Back then, the only izakaya with a large selection was Yoronotaki, while the majority of others operated on a much smaller scale, with a limited menu, like yakitori, hot pot, and similar. So a large restaurant with a large and

varied menu would attract a large number of customers, which means we could sell the frozen foods that we handled at our company. This was a forerunner of the large-scale izakaya franchises of the present, that have a really wide selection.

Taking on new challenges was amusing, and when they succeed, it meant receiving more in revenue. Always thinking of new ideas became a part of my daily routine. On the other hand, the time I was able to dedicate to my initial goal, preparation for the National Bar Examination gradually decreased. At the time, I was taking correspondence courses of the Faculty of Law at Chuo University while also studying for the National Bar Examination.

I had to make a choice, either to continue studying and enter the field of law, or to continue with sales. I was lost and sought my university professor's advice. "You should be an entrepreneur and a person who

employs lawyers." His reply was simple and straight to the point. I had made my decision. I abandoned my study for the National Bar Examination. However, I did continue with the university correspondence courses and graduated in 7 years.

Although I entered the fishery industry as a part-timer, my time spent thinking about customers had led to me realization that my ideas could lead to making money. This was my purpose. This is how I began working even harder in the world of business.

[Interviewer: Masatoshi Ono]

[Photo caption]
Tokyo Tsukiji Market



東京・築地市場

「前のめり」で突っ走る

「すしさんまい」
喜代村社長 木村 清 (70) Ⅱ

「15歳で入った航空自衛隊で学んだことのひとつに『倒れるな』前に倒れる』がある。どんなに困難があっても逃げずに挑め、との教えだ。飛び込んだビジネスの世界でも、この姿勢を貫いた」

水産大手である大洋漁業（現マルハニチロ）の関連会社「新洋商事」に入社したのが21歳のとき。とにかく時間がもったいなくて、睡眠時間は1日1時間半くらい取れればいいところでした。朝は午前0時45分に起き、住んでいた東京・中野から豊海と月島の倉庫に行く。2人トラックに冷凍食品や鯨のプロック肉などの魚を積み込むのですが、当時は過積載などの取り締まりは厳しくなかったため、積み込むだけとどんどん積み込みました。荷台が重くなると、トラックのバランスが崩れて前輪が浮いてしまつた。そこで助手席にも積み荷を載せた。全部で6トンくらい積んでいましたからね。それで千葉・君津まで行くんです。当時は高速道路がなく、途中からは砂利道でしたが、君津まで突っ走る。午前4時までに築地にこんな返りなければならぬ、6トンの積み荷は降ろすだけでも1時間はかかるのですが、時間が無いのとせっかちなので40分以内ですませました。築地では全国から集まってきたトラックと順番に並んで、魚を積み込む。今度は八王子に納品です。この仕事をすませて8時まで中野の会社に戻り、朝礼や事務仕事などをした後、また倉庫に行く。今度は契約した魚や冷凍食品などを積んで浦和や土浦、大宮などで配達しながら、

「いい品物が入りました」と営業をかけていました。会社に戻るのは午後8時ごろ。そこから伝票書きです。朝一番で働いているので処理する案件が多く、終わるのは10時過ぎになるのがあつた。それから先輩に誘われればマジヤンをしてようやく帰ります。そして翌日も午前0時45分には起床して豊海と月島の倉庫へ。夜は中野の居酒屋でよくモツ煮を食べましたね。その居酒屋はもうなくなつてしまいましたが、おぼろいっばいに盛られたモツ煮は値段も安く、とてもおいしかったです。あの忙しい中で大好きになったモツ煮の味は今も忘れられません。やはり食べるものは人を幸せにするのです」

「独立を決意する」

新洋商事ではビジネスの根本を学び、居酒屋の提案などこれまで業界にはなかった試みにも挑戦しました。ところが3年ほどたったころでしよつか、水産会社の範疇を超えて、いろいろなことをやっていたため会社から「そういうことをやめてもらっては困る。余計なことはせず、自分の仕事だけをやればいい」と言われてしまいました。いろいろな経験をさせてもらったので恩義のある会社ですが、上司のすすめもあって、同じ水産業界で、稼ぎの保証はないが、自分の裁量で働け、独立採算のようなシステムを探っていた会社に移ることを決めました。その会社では現金の回収や支払い、流通、在庫の管理など、すべて自分でやる。勉強させてもらいましたね。ところが業務中の交通事故で、状況では私が被害者だったのに、相手が取引先の倉庫のトラックだったというので、「お前がかあれ」という。黙然としない思いでいたところ、上司から「そろそろ独立した」との言葉を聞いたとき、立ち上がり「そして昭和54年、27歳で『木村商店』を起したのです」。

会社といっても知り合いの会社に机と椅子をひとつ借りて、電話機を置いただけ。いっちょやってみようかとの希望と、資金もないのに大丈夫か、という不安のなかでの出発でした。

（聞き手 大野正利）

話の肖像画

Portrait of the story

Plunging Forward, Racing Head-on

《I entered Japan Air Self-Defense Force at the age of 15. One of the things I learned while in service, was that “if I was to fall down, I should fall face-forward.” Meaning, no matter the difficulty, do not run away and always take on the challenge. I also pushed forward with this attitude in the business world.》

When I joined Shinyo-Shoji, a company affiliated with Taiyo Fishery Ltd. (present Maruha Nichiro Corporation), a major company in the fishery industry, I was 24 years old. I had no time to lose. I was even willing to sleep for only an hour and a half everyday. I woke up at 00:45 AM in the morning to go to work from my home in Nakano, Tokyo to a warehouse in either Toyomi or Tsukishima. I would stack up blocks of frozen products or whale meat on a 2-ton truck. Since overload restrictions were loose back then, loading up as

much as possible was the way to go. Once the cargo bed was too heavy, the truck would lose balance and have its front wheels tilt upwards. That's when we stacked the goods on the passenger seat. In total, I would say we probably loaded up to 6 tons. That's what was then carried to Kimitsu in Chiba. There was no highway back then and some of the roads were dirt and gravel. But it didn't matter, we raced straight to Kimitsu. We had to return back to Tsukiji by 4:00 AM, and 6 tons worth of goods took an hour to unload. But since we did not have time, the unloading was done in 40 minutes, because we were so impatient. Once back at Tsukiji, we lined up with the trucks from all over Japan to load up on fish. Then, it was off to Hachioji for delivery. After I was done with this, I returned to the company office in Nakano by 8:00 AM to attend the morning assembly, office work and other. Once that was done, I then went back to the

warehouse. This time I loaded up on the contracted fishes and frozen foods, delivered them to Urawa, Tsuchiura, and Omiya, while praising their quality in a good sales manner.

By the time I got back to the office it would be around 8:00 PM. That's when I tackled the invoices. Since I was working from the crack of dawn, there was so much that needed to be processed, and it was always past 10:00 PM when I finished. Then I would hang out with my older colleagues if I was invited, and would only get home after that. And just like that, I would wake up the next day at 00:45 AM to go to the warehouses in Toyomi or Tsukishima. In the night, I would often eat offal stew at an izakaya in Nakano. That particular izakaya does not exist any longer, but the overflowing bowl of stewed offal they served was affordable, yet tasty. I will never forget the taste of offal stew that I enjoyed so much during those busy times. Food really can make a

person happy.

《Going Independent.》

I learned the fundamentals of business at my time in Shinyo-Shoji, and even challenged myself in other industries such as izakaya pubs. But after about 3 years or so of taking part in various things beyond that of a fishery company, I started to receive push back from within. I was told to hold off on doing extra and focus on my job. I have so much appreciation for this company and the experience I gained while working there. I followed the advice of my superior, and I decided to switch to another company, regardless of the pay, since it was more accepting of their employees' work on their own, and having a more financially independent in-house system.

At the new company I worked on all of the posts myself: from collection and cash payments, to shipping,

President

KIYOSHI KIMURA (70) Ⅱ

inventory management, and other. I learned so much. But aside from the low pay, an incident occurred when during an accident at work, I was held liable, even though I was the victim, because the warehouse truck involved was owned by a customer. I was quite dissatisfied with this, and it was at that time I received a “go independent” advice from my superior. So in 1979, when I was 27 years old, I founded the Kimura-Shoten (The Kimura Store). Of course, this “company” I founded was nothing more than a desk and some chairs borrowed from a friend, and a single land-line telephone. But this also meant that I no longer had to worry about what my superiors or colleagues were thinking. This was how it all started. A mix between my never-say-never attitude and a bit of worry about the finances.

[Interviewer: Masatoshi Ono]

[Photo caption]
Tokyo Tsukiji Market



東京・築地市場

広がる事業に楽しくて仕方ない

「すしざんまい」
喜代村社長 木村 清 (70) 氏

独立はしたものの、手元に潤沢な資金があるわけではありません。そこで最初のうちは「1カ月決済」とし、売り先にはその月の30日に決済、仕入れ先には翌月1日の支払いをお願いしました。この間の1、2日で資金を動かして、商品を回転させるようにしたのです。得意分野である水産物の取り扱いから始め、収益が上がっていったので、半年後にお弁当屋さんを開きました。

このお弁当屋さんと挑戦したのが「温かいお弁当」です。当時のお弁当は冷たいまま販売されるのが常識でしたが、それでは味気ない。お客さんに愛されるような、温かいお弁当を食べてもらいたいとの一心で販売に乗り出したのです。ところが、保健所からストップがかかった。理由は「いわず、ただ「認められませぬ」です。何度も訪問して原因を聞いたのですが「ダメなもの」は「タメ」の一点張り。途方に迷いました。

何度も来るので、気の毒に思ったのでしょう。あるとき、担当者と同じ部署の女性が「そり、一箇が出るから、許可できないんです」と教えてくれた。そこで弁当に発生する菌について徹底的に研究し、「作って2時間以内なら大丈夫」との結論を出しました。食中毒対策を追加して申請し、ようやく温かい弁当の販売を認められました。11時半には職場に配達し、正午には食べてもらうフローを作った。宣伝で「2時間以内で召し上がってください。2時間過ぎたら食中毒の可能性ありますので正露丸をつけます。戒名も用意します」とうたったが、大評判になって売れました。こうした経験もあり、お弁

《昭和64年、27歳で独立。徐々に事業を広げていった》

当屋さんの経営も軌道に乗りました。

《時代はバブル期前後。食品以外の事業も手掛けた》

あるとき、水産会社の知り合いから、あまっているコンテナを置かないかと持ちかけられました。そこで考えたのが、コンテナを改造したモーテルの運営です。それがオープン前日に警察から「風俗営業の許可は取っているのか」と指導を受け、やむなく断念。他の使い道を模索していたところ、カラオケスナックの運用を思いつきました。コンテナに防音を施し、ソファと台所、冷蔵庫にカラオケセットなどを入れ、簡易なスナックで飲みながら心おきなく歌っていただくのが目算です。スナックが次々と借りてくれ、気づけば契約が300室以上、大成功となりました。

レンタルビデオ店も手がけました。国内ではおそろしくやっていたことだと思います。当時、家庭にビデオデッキが普及し始めたことで、レコードのレンタルにヒントを得てビデオ版もできないかと考えたのです。これも当たって、すぐ15店舗に拡大。当初は手書きの貸出票でビデオを管理していたのですが、在庫の本数や利用者が多くなると、手書きでは間に合わなくなりました。そこでコンピューターでの管理を思いつきました。

ここでは航空自衛隊時代の経験が生きました。バグジシステムというコンピュータを使っていたので、人員や物資を管理するプログラムはお手のものです。レンタルビデオの管理プログラムは大手コンピュータメーカーに発注したので、1年たっても出来上がらない。そこで知り合いのプログラマーと私とで2カ月間で完成させました。

当時は埼玉県越谷市の千間台に住んでいましたので、午前3時に起床し、途中で先輩に乗り込んでもらって4時半までに築地に行く。7時まで市場で働き、切り身屋さんを手伝って朝ご飯を、8時になる。9時から事務仕事や営業などを行い、午後6時過ぎには手掛けていた居酒屋や弁当屋を11時近くまで手伝う。事業が広がっていくのが楽しくて仕方ありませんでした。

(聞き手 大野正利)

話の肖像画

Portrait of the story

Enjoying Ever-Expanding Business

《Independent at the age of 27, in 1979. I gradually expanded my business.》

Even though I was independent, that didn't mean I had infinite funds. So I started off by having my business deals settled within the month, meaning, that the buyers were requested to pay by the 30th of the month and I paid the suppliers by the 1st of next month. I moved the funds around during that 1 or 2 days to rotate the products. I started by handling fishery products which were my specialty, and since revenue increased, I opened a lunch box shop after 6 months.

For this new shop, I attempted at warm and freshly made lunch boxes. Back then, it was common for the lunch boxes to be sold cold, and I knew that could be improved. All I wanted to do was to sell warm and freshly made lunch boxes to customers, just like they would be homemade. But then came the public health inspectors and put a stop to that. The reason? Nothing. They just won't allow it. I visited their office several times

to find out the reason but all I got was a simple, "No means no." I was at a loss for words.

But someone must have felt sorry for me after seeing me coming in day and night. A lady who worked in the same department as the person in charge secretly told me that they can't give the green light because of bacteria. I immediately researched the occurrence of bacteria inside lunch boxes and found that the lunch boxes were safe from bacteria within 2 hours after being made. I applied once again after adding in measures for food poisoning and was finally granted the green light to sell my warm lunch boxes. Then it was all about charting a flow to first take orders in the morning, then to deliver to workplaces and households by 11:30 AM, and have them be eaten by 12:00 PM. I added the following in my ads. "Please enjoy the lunches within 2 hours. After 2 hours, there is a chance of food poisoning. Just in case, herbal medicine is enclosed. Will also prepare your posthumous name." The ad was a hit

and the lunches sold well. After all these experience, the lunch box business finally got off the ground.

《It was the eve before the economic bubble period. My business expanded to other ventures besides food.》

One day, I was approached by an associate from a fishery company if I was interested in purchasing their spare containers. My immediate thought was to renovate the containers into a motel and operate it. But a day before opening, I was hit with a notice from the police asking, if I had certification for designated entertainment business, and I had to abandon the project. It was while I was thinking of another way of using the containers, when I thought of operating a karaoke bar. I imagined that if I added proper soundproofing and furnishing, like sofas, kitchens, refrigerators and karaoke sets, it would turn into a comfortable singing place. Containers quickly rented out, and by the time I got around to it, I

had contracts for more than 300 of these karaoke bars. It was a resounding success.

I also dealt with video rentals. This was before anyone was operating such an establishment in Japan. It was right around the time when VCRs started popping up in households, and after taking a hint from vinyl record rentals, I thought of starting a video version of that. This also turned into a success and soon expanded to 15 stores. At first, videotapes were managed through writing rental receipts by hand, but once the inventory and users grew enormously, that became impossible. That's when I thought of using a computer.

This was where my time in the Japan Air Self-Defense Force really helped. Since I was stationed at a division that commanded and controlled the air defense by using a computer called the BADGE system, handling a program that managed personnel and goods was a piece of cake. I ordered a program for managing videotapes with a large computer company, but nothing was delivered even after a year had passed. So I took it up

myself, contacted a programmer friend of mine, and we created it within two months.

Back then, my daily routine started after waking up at 3:00 AM, and from Sengendai in Koshigaya City, Saitama Prefecture, I picked up my senior colleague on the way, and we went to Tsukiji, arriving until 4:30 AM. After working at the market until 7:00 AM, I helped out at a fish cutting shop and enjoyed breakfast they prepared. Then I moved on to office and sales work from 9:00 AM, and after 6:00 PM I helped out at an izakaya bar or a lunch box shop I was managing until close to 1:00 AM. I was just having the time of my life watching my business grow.

[Interviewer: Masatoshi Ono]

[Photo caption]
Tokyo Tsukiji Market

マグロを求めて世界各地へ

「すしさんまい」
喜代村社長 木村 清 (70) 氏

マグロを1日150〜160匹ほど、解体していたところ



《海外で食品の生産を始めた》
独立して1年たった昭和55年ごろから、収益を上げるため、取り扱う食品に工夫を施していきまし。例えば大量売りのたイクラやエビです。当時は大バックで売り買っていたのを、小分けにして小さなバックに詰め替えたところ、扱い量が減えまし。運搬中に中身が破損したエビの大バックを安く購入し、大丈夫なものは小さなバックで、破損したものはすり身にしてお総菜用に売ったりしていました。

井当に使った漬物や唐揚げなども手掛けるようになったのですが、これは外国から調達しました。きつかけはバンコクに出張してはシルクのスーツはオーダーメイドでも5千円で作ってくれたのです。日本では数万円です。そこで日本で採寸したデータをファクスでバンコクに送り、現地でシルクのスーツを製造して輸入するフローを作りました。この方式を漬物や唐揚げにも取り入れたのです。

漬物は中国で栽培し、加工して輸入するようにしました。当時、国内で1キロあたり300円ほどだったキュウリが、中国では10円です。ダイコンやナスなども安く、現地で栽培から加工までの環境を整備しました。唐揚げはタイで、こちらも現地で飼育から肉の加工まで行うようにした。プロイラーの開発まで手がけました。当時の唐揚げはモモ肉だけでしたが、安価なムネ肉でも十分おいしく、これが分り、これも取り入れた。今では食品の海外生産は一般的ですが、当時は私以外でやっているという話を聞いたことはありませんでした。

《マグロの輸入を始めた。マグロを求めて海外を巡る旅の始まりとなる》

昭和57年ごろにニューヨークを訪れたとき、ハドソン川の河口にあるマーケットで驚きの光景を目にしました。本マグロの最高級部位である大トロと赤身、ホホ肉などが同じ値段、しかも1坪200円程度という、日本では考えられない値段で売られていたのです。そのころ、外国ではマグロの人気は高くなかったのですが、食文化の違いでこれほど魚の値段は違ってくるか、と思い知りました。そのときは大トロだけを輸入して帰国しました。

その後、米国大西洋側の北部メーン州沖でマグロが取れると聞き、船をチャーターして釣りに行きました。釣り上げた本マグロを向四か、日本に送ったのですが、その頃が気づいたことですが、現地では食への習慣がないので、ウニやウナギが手つかずのまま、海や川に生息していたのです。漁獲の許可を取って、こちらも輸入しました。これもいい商売になりました。こうした経験から、海外のいづこでマグロが取れるのか、学ばようになったのです。

あるとき、休暇でモナコのモンテカルロに行ったのですが、お世話になった旅行代理店のマドリッド支店長から「マグロがあるの、買わないか」と持ち掛けられた。興味はあったのですが、どこで買入するのか、全然分かりません。すると、「とにかくスペインの港町アリカンテまで行って、これと言われた。そこで急遽、旅程を変更。レンタカーを借りて地中海沿いの走り、指定されたアリカンテの市場まで行ったのです。何十匹だったか覚えていませんが、大量に購入しました。国内市場での反応もよく、知り合いのすし店でも好評でした。すぐに輸入ルートを作りましたが、これが現在、日本で流通している地中海で取れる大西洋クロマグロの始まりだと思っています。

経営していた東京・門前仲町のカラオケボックスの近くに、地上げで閉店した鮮魚店があったんです。そこを借りて、店頭でマグロを解体、販売したところ、お客さんに大好評。これも新鮮な経験でした。

(聞き手 大野正利)

話の
肖像画

Portrait of the story

Traveling the World in Search of Tuna

《Starting Food Production Overseas.》

A year after starting on my own, in 1980, I was trying out ideas on the foods I was handling in order to boost revenue. For example, salmon roe and shrimp were bulk sellers. Back then, I found that I can boost sales by purchasing in large packs and then repackaging into smaller ones. I bought shrimp in large packs at a low price, because they were damaged during shipping. Then, I made sure to repack the shrimp that were good quality into smaller packs, and turned the damaged ones into paste for use in ready-made dishes.

I also started handling pickles and fried chicken used in lunch boxes by procuring them from abroad. This all happened because of a story I heard during a business trip to Bangkok. I heard that a custom-made silk suit could be made there at a cost of 5000 JPY. In Japan, the same suit would

cost several tens of thousands of yen. Consequently, I created a flow, where the Japanese measurement data was sent to Bangkok by fax, the silk suit was made there, and it was imported to Japan afterwards. I took the same approach for pickles and fried chicken.

I farmed and processed the pickles in China, and then imported them. At the time, a kilograms of cucumber was worth 300 JPY in Japan, while it was 100 JPY in China. Daikon radish and egg plants were also inexpensive, so I developed an on-site environment from farming to processing. Fried chicken was handled in Thailand, where the farming and processing was also done on-site. I even dealt with the development of broiler chicken. Only thigh meat was used for fried chicken back then, but when we found that even inexpensive breast meat was delicious, we incorporated this too. Nowadays it is common for food production to be done abroad, but

back then, I did not hear of anyone else that would be doing it besides us.

《Start of tuna imports. The beginning of an adventure across the world in search of tuna.》

When I visited New York in 1982, I saw something that surprised me at a market near the mouth of the Hudson River. The most premium portions of a blue-fin tuna, the fatty and lean red tuna, and the cheeks were all sold at the same price, at about 1200 JPY, which was unthinkable in Japan. At that time, tuna was not as popular overseas, but even then I was astonished at such a difference in price, all because of a difference in dietary culture. I only purchased the fatty tuna portion and went back home that time.

Later I learned that tuna could be caught just offshore Northern Main on the US side of the Atlantic Ocean. I immediately charted a boat and went

fishing for tuna there. I then sent several blue-fin tuna that I caught back to Japan, but I also noticed other things as well. I noticed that eel and sea urchin were just lurking about in the sea and the rivers without being caught, probably because they are not included in the dietary habits of the locals. After acquiring the license, I caught these too and imported them to Japan. This also turned out to be fantastic business. Due to such experience, I learned when and where tuna was caught around the world.

One day while I was vacationing in Monte Carlo in Monaco, I was approached by a manager of the travel agency's branch from Madrid inquiring if I wanted to purchase some tuna. I was interested, but had no clue where and how I could make the purchase. I was simply told to go to the coastal town of Alicante in Spain. I immediately changed my travel itinerary. After renting a car and driving along the Mediterranean

Coast, I arrived to the market in Alicante. I do not remember how many tens of tons it was, but I do remember that I purchased a lot. I received good feedback from the market in Japan, even from my friend's sushi shop. I set up a trade route, and this I believe, was the start of the now popular Atlantic blue-fin tuna caught in the Mediterranean market in Japan.

There was a fish store in Monzen-Nakacho in Tokyo near a karaoke bar that I operated that closed due to land sharks. I rented this store, and when I held tuna cutting sales shows, it was a great hit with the customers. This too was another revelation.

[Interviewer: Masatoshi Ono]

[Photo caption]
In the days of cutting 150 to 160 tuna per day



東京・築地市場

銀行に裏切られ…蘇った仕事への思い

「すしざんまい」
喜代村社長 木村 清 (70) 回

《昭和54年、27歳で独立し、事業もどんどん拡大していった。順風満帆ななか、パブルの崩壊が忍び寄る》

パブル期の昭和63年、当時の竹下登内閣が始めた「ふるさと創生事業」があります。地域振興のため、地方自治体に1億円を交付する事業ですが、この事業で自治体にカラオケバスを購入してもらおうと、バス100台を改造した人がいました。それが1台も売れずに困っていた。そこで私がカラオケバスを借り、地上げで更地になった都心の一角でカラオケ村を造ったこともありま。いつしか手掛ける事業は80近くにもなっていました。

パブル期には総額で百数十億円を借り入れていましたが、パブルが崩壊し、それに続く金融危機が訪れると、銀行は一旦返済を求めてきた。収益は上がったおとり、不良債権もなかったもので、事業は縮小せずに残額4400万円まで返済をすませ、一息ついていました。

《平成9年、事件が発覚した》

当時すでに中国で漬物の事業を行っていた、ダイコンの作付けで資金が必要になったので、ある銀行に借りに行った。ところが担当者が「木村さん、貸すことはできませんね。ブラックリストに載っていますよ」と言。身に覚えのない話にびっくりしました。そんなことはない。私は不動産などの投資はしていないし、元金も利子も支払いを滞らせたことはない。これまで優良貸出先として、融資を受けてきた。それがいきなり、整理回収機構の管理下に置かれる可能性があるという。

調べてみると、真相が判明しました。問題となっていたのはメインバンクの北海道拓殖銀行（拓銀）からの借入れです。この借入れは2000万円、拓銀とはおつきあいが深く、

手形の貸し付けという形で借り入れたのですが、これは年に1回、手形の書き換えをするだけで返済は充分、求めないという契約でした。そのため、前年もその前年も返済を求められなかった。ところが、手形の書き換えだけの契約書に印鑑を押していたのです。

ところがその年だけ、違っていました。手形の書き換えの分厚い契約書の一部に「一括返済に依る」との記載があったのです。しかも拓銀の担当者は私が海外出張中にわが家を訪れてきた。女房はそんな事情はまったく知りません。女房から国際電話で連絡を受けた私は、「ああ、いつもの手形の書き換えか。印鑑を押していた」と返事をし、しまいました。今思えば、拓銀はこの年、経営破綻しています。担当者はかなり構わず、回収に走っていたのでしょう。そもそも一括返済を求めるといふ重要な契約書類なら、女房に印鑑を押させるのではなく、私に詳細な説明をすべきではないか。そもそも手形の書き換えの書類に、そんな重要な文言を紛れ込ませていたのか。そのやり方に激しい怒りを覚えました。が、もう遅い。残ったほかの借入金とともに拓銀に一括返済するため、すべての事業を清算することにしました。

《原点に立ち返る出来事も起こった》

帰国した私は拓銀に激しく抗議するとともに、事業の清算に乗り出しました。こうしたなか、今でも拭いきれない大きな後悔を生むことをしてしまいました。女房に「お前、なんでこんな重要な書類に印鑑を押したんだ」と言ってしまったのです。泣き始めた女房をみたとき、われに返りました。「俺は女房を泣かせるために仕事をしたきたのではない。幸せにするためにやってきたのではないか。そして、借入金はずべて返済しました。女房への思いとともに、戦闘機パイロットや法曹界の夢をあきらめ、ビジネスの世界に入ったときの決意も思い出しました。お客さんにおいしい魚を食べてもらい、幸せになってもらうために仕事をする。すべてを失ってしまいました。が、私にとって働くこの原点が蘇りました。」(聞き手 大野正利)

話の
肖像画

Portrait
of the story

Back-Stabbed by the Bank ... Return of Desire to Succeed

sushizanmai
KIYOMURA Corp.

President
KIYOSHI KIMURA (70) 回

《Turned independent at the age of 27 in 1979, business kept expanding. Business was booming with the economic crash just around the corner.》

At the height of the bubble period in 1988, there was the Furusato Creation Project started by the then Takeshita Cabinet. This project was to issue 100 million JPY to local government for regional development. There was even a person who renovated 100 buses into karaoke buses and sold them to their municipality. But they were not able to sell even 1 bus. That was where I came in and rented these buses to turn a small corner in the middle of Tokyo (that was vacant due to land sharking) into a karaoke town. By that time, there were 80 or so businesses that I was managing.

During the height of the bubble I was able to get a loan above 100 billion yen, but once it crashed and resulted in the financial crisis, the banks all came asking for their money back. This was at

a time when profits were up and we had no bad debts. Likewise, we did not shrink our business and had even just recently paid back the loan down to 44 million yen. We were taking a much needed break at this point.

《But in 1997, an "Incident" Occurred.》

Since we had already started the pickle business in China by then, we visited a bank to ask for a loan, because we needed some funding to farm daikon radish. But the person in charge had told me that they could not loan me anything since I was on a black list of some sort. I was shocked when hearing this. That couldn't be? I had not invested in real estate, nor have I ever defaulted in paying back neither the principal nor the interest. My business has always received loans as a prime candidate. But now, out of the blue, we faced the possibility of being held under the control of the Resolution and Collection

Corporation.

I was able to figure out what happened when I dug in deeper. The issue was a loan from our main bank, the Hokkaido Takushoku Bank, Ltd. (hereinafter, "Takugin"). The loan was in the amount of 20 million, executed in the form of a bill of exchange due to our long relationship. We had an agreement that this bill of exchange was to be rewritten once a year to keep Takugin from asking their money back. That was why we were not asked to pay the money back for several years, and we continued to stamp our approval of the rewrite.

However, things were different that particular year. There was fine print within a thick stack of contracts regarding the rewrite of the bill of exchange that read "loans to be paid in lump." The person in charge at the Takugin came to all the way to my house while I was away on business. My wife knew nothing about this. When I first heard about this from my wife on an international call, I thought it was the

usual rewrite of the bill of exchange. So I told her to stamp my seal of approval. Looking back now, Takugin eventually filed for bankruptcy the following year. The person in charge must have been looking for a way to collect as much money as possible at that time. In either case, if this was such an important contract that it asks for "loans to be paid in lump," then the information should have been explained to me in detail, not just my wife stamping a seal of approval. If anything, was it even permitted to add such important fine print without any explanation to a contract about rewriting a bill of exchange? I was so angered at the way they did this, but it was already too late. In order to return the rest of my loans in lump, I had to liquidate my entire business.

《A Chance to Return Back to Roots.》

Upon my return to Japan, along with lodging protests to Takugin, I had to begin liquidating my business. During

this time, I did something I regret to this day. I reprimanded my wife for stamping my seal of approval to such an important document. It was only when I saw her crying that I came to my senses. I did not work this far to make my wife cry, I did all of this to make her happy. And, I repaid all of my loans. It was with these thoughts that I remembered my determination, when I abandoned my dreams of becoming a fighter pilot, a member of the legal community, as well as my entrance into the world of business. I have been working with the purpose of bringing happiness to my customers through their enjoyment of delicious seafood. Although I had lost everything, this reminded me of my basic motivation for work success.

[Interviewer: Masatoshi Ono]

[Photo caption]
Tokyo Tsukiji Market



すしざんまい別館を開店した平成13年12月ごろ

仲間からの「マグロファンド」に熱き思い 「すしさんまい」
喜代村社長 木村 清 (70) 20

「すしざんまい」
喜代村社長 **木村 清** (70) **20**

《平成9年、バブル崩壊にと
もなうメインバンクの「裏切り」
により、手掛けていた80もの事
業をすべて手放すことになっ
た。失意のどん底にいたとき、
ビジネス仲間たちが声をかけて
くれた》

事業の整理はつらかったですね。お井上さん、カオスエナク、レンタルビデオに屋台村……。どれも思い入れがありましたので。まずはそれぞれ社内の担当者に、独立して事業を続けたいのであれば受け継いでもらいました。首尾よくいかなかった、ビジネス仲間にも事業を引き取ってもらえなかつた、と頼みませんでした。現場で事業を支えてくれた社員やパートナーさんたちが困らないよう、ひとつひとつ整理していったのです。

すべての事業の整理によつて、
 最終わがみかへけたころ、
 ジネス仲間や知り合いの「ゴルフでもしませんか、みんなが木村さんを囲んでやりたいと言っているから、コンペをしましょう」と誘われまして、とてもゴルフをする気持ちではなかったのですが、ビジネスではお世話になったり、お付き合いをしておもたたりした方々です。中には事業を引き受けてくれる人もいました。そういう方々が損得を超え、すべてを失った私に声を掛けてくれた。その気持ちがつれしくて、ゴルフコンペに参加することになりました。

《ゴルフ場に着いて、驚いた。参加者は170人を超えていたのだ》

ゴルフは通常、アウトの一番ホールにスタートの10番ホールから順番にスタートします。ところが、がそのときは、あまりに参加者が多く、全ホールから一斉にスタートする「ショットガン方式」になりました。参加者は20人程度だろうと思つてゐる私は、初めての「ショットガン方式」に面食らつと同時に、「こんなに集ま

つてくれて、俺は本当に幸せ者だな」と感謝の気持ちを抱えてスタートしたことを覚えています。

そのラウンド中、女房から電話が入った。「うちの銀行口座に知らない人たちがらこんどお金が振り込まれている」と言うのです。そんなことはない。何かの間違いだろう」。気にもとめていなかったのですが、昼食中に再び女房から電話があった。「また入金があった。まだ続いている」。さすがに気になり、「誰からだと聞きました。伝えられた名前は、なんとみんなこのゴルフ場にいる。『そんなわけないだろ。今一緒にゴルフしているんだから』」でも通帳の名前はその方たちだよ。私を聞んできているゴルフコンペの最中で、お金の話はしたくはありませんでした。それでも気になったので、何人かにたずねたのです。

その返答には驚きました「木村さん、大変な方だから、気にしないで使つてよ」「マダロの夢があるんですよ。応援するから頑張ってください」。なぜゴルフなのか。なぜこの日なのか。私が事業の整理に奔走しているとき、ビジネス仲間と相談して私を支援することを決め、この日に同時に振り込むため、ゴルフコンペを開催してくれたのでしよう。とてに汗をかいてきた仲間たちの心遣いに、胸が熱くなりました。

1人あたり数百万円から数千万円の入金がありました。借用書も契約書もなく、返済期限も何も求めないお金です。持つべきものは友です。絶対に恩返しするぞ。感激とともに、覚悟も固まりました。

《この支援金は「マダグラフ
ンド」と名付けられた》

支援してくれたビジネス仲間
は、私のマクロへの思いを理解
してくれていた。そこでまず、
アイルランドに行くマクロを
釣り、私の気持ちとして支援し
てくれた人たちに取ったマクロ
を配り、お金は全額返金しまし
た。さらに女房も「みんながこ
れだけ応援してくれるのだから
、また事業を続けたい」とい
うと言ってくれた。必ずみんなに
恩返しをするぞ。感謝とともに
かつての情熱がふつふつと湧い
てきました。

(聞き手 大野正利)

話
①

肖像画

Portrait of the story

My Passion and Purpose for the “Tuna Fund” Established by My Friends

sushizanmai
KIYOMURA Corp.

President

KIYOSHI KIMURA (70) 20

«In 1997 after the economic crash, which was accompanied by the back-stabbing of my main bank, I had to abandon 80 or so of my businesses. I was in the depth of despair when my business companions came to my aid.»

It was tough having to sort out my business. Lunch boxes, karaoke bars, video rental stores, the yataimura food stand village ... I had memories of every single one of them. I first asked everyone in charge of these businesses if they want to take over, and helped them with the transition. If that didn't work, I asked several of my business companions to take over the business. I had to make sure that my employees and part-time workers at each of the locations received sufficient support. I was progressing with one task after another.

Once I was almost done sorting through all of the businesses, many of my business companions invited me to

play golf. "We all wish to play with you, let's have a competition," they proposed. I really wasn't in the mood, but they were the people who had supported me in my businesses, and we had lasting relationships. Some had even taken over my businesses. Companions like this extended their arms to a person who had nothing to his name. I felt really appreciated, and had accepted their invitation to golf.

«A shock was awaiting at the golf course. There were over 170 participants.»

Usually golf starts from hole 1 or hole 10, and then continues in order to the next numbered hole. But since there were so many participants that day, the game began simultaneously from all holes in a “shotgun style” game. I had thought that only 20 or so people would be there, so imagine my surprise at my first-ever shotgun

game. I felt appreciation as I started playing for the many who came to golf with me on this day.

During this game, I received a call from my wife. She said, "Our bank account is receiving money transfers left and right from a lot of people that we don' t know!" I said "That can' t be, there must be some kind of mistake." I thought nothing of it, but I got another call from my wife during lunch. "We just got another money transfer, it' s still going on!" At this point I was really confused and I asked who the money was from. It was at that point I found out the people who were sending me money were all here at this golf game. "That is impossible, I' m playing golf with them right now," I said. But my wife replied, "But that' s what it says on the bank ledger." As much as I didn't want to talk about money during a golf game. I was curious and had to know, so I asked around.

The replies I got were surprising.

“Hey, don’ t worry, you need it, so just use it.” “We know you dream about tuna all the time. We are with you, so do what you have to do.” But why golf? And why today? It turned out that while I was busy sorting out my businesses, my business companions decided to pitch in and support me by sending me money on this day. This must have been the reason for organizing this game. I was overwhelmed with the support my friends, who had already worked so hard alongside me, had shown me at this point.

There were money transfers that amounted to several millions and tens of millions in yen. All of this was money without IOUs, contracts or agreements. Money without a deadline to pay back. These are truly my friends and I will never forget this moment. I knew I had to pay them back. Not only was I grateful, but now my mind was set and determined.

«I named this financial support the Tuna Fund.»

My business companions understood how I felt toward the tuna business. The first thing I did with this money was to go tuna fishing in Ireland, and share the tuna I caught among my supporters. Also, I paid back all the money they had sent me. Additionally, even my wife was also supportive. She said, I should continue with my business, because I really have huge support. I knew I had to pay everyone back. Along with the gratitude was the return of my desire to succeed.

[Interviewer: Masatoshi Ono

[Photo caption]
Opening of the SUSHIZANMAI Bekkan
(annex), around December, 2001