

Environmental Volunteer Leader Development Program in Japan



Corporate Environment Division

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We nurture environmental volunteer leaders to promote environmental conservation activities in local communities.

The Ricoh Group promotes all-employee participatory sustainable environmental management. It is very important to build employee awareness because it is the employee who carries out the activities that achieve the Group's goals. How environmentally conscious employees act at home and in the communities where they live will contribute to reducing environmental impact throughout society. In 1999, Ricoh launched the Environmental Volunteer Leader Development Program. By the end of fiscal 2004, as many as 277 people had participated in the program.

Environmental Volunteer Leader Development Program

Ricoh's nature seminar elementary course (overnight training held three times a year)

Participants learn about the natural environment surrounding them and feel the importance of the ecosystem in the field as well as the basics of volunteer activities. On completion of the program, participants are certified as environmental volunteer leaders.

Registered as a leader

Follow-up Training

Ricoh Company Meeting for Environmental Volunteer Leaders (held twice a year on weekdays)

This meeting is designed for leaders to exchange information and develop skills. Examples of the volunteer activities that leaders take part in are introduced, and participants get the latest information from outside experts.

Advanced Training

Nature seminar intermediate course (overnight training held once a year)

Participants learn how to take more joy in continuing volunteer activities and gain the knowledge and skills required to give environmental training to other people.

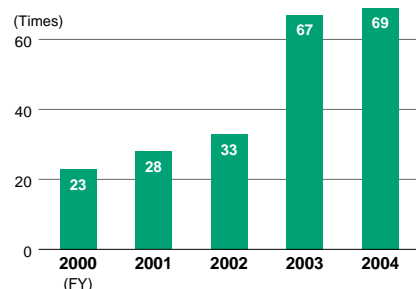
Advanced Training

Ricoh forest seminar (Two-night seminar held once a year)

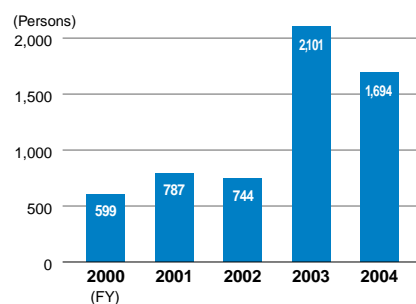
Participants learn about the composition and structure of forests that are often unnoticed as well as the mechanism of nature and how men deal with forests. Training takes place in the Afan Forest in Nagano Prefecture.

Environmental volunteer leaders take the initiative in environmental activities involving family, colleagues, and local people.

Number of Environmental Volunteer Activities



Number of Participants in Environmental Volunteer Activities



Q What is the Environmental Volunteer Leader Development Program?

A The program nurtures volunteer leaders who can promote environmental conservation activities by themselves.

We believe that it is more effective to encourage employees to plan and carry out volunteer activities by themselves, and in the process nurture leaders to promote such activities, than to make them participate in company-run activities. In June 1999, the Ricoh Group launched an Environmental Volunteer Leader Development Program. In fiscal 2001, the program was expanded to include Ricoh Group employees and retirees. By the end of fiscal 2004, as many as 277 persons had participated in the program. This fiscal year, environmental volunteer leaders planned and organized 69 projects to build environmental awareness. They worked with other employees, their families, and friends to help local communities. After completing the program and taking part in actual environmental activities, many of the leaders wish to draw up projects of their own. We provide them with information about volunteer activities in the community and the opportunity to join those activities.

Q How does the program work?

A Participants will become more conscious and knowledgeable and acquire necessary know-hows.

The program begins with the elementary courses, followed by intermediary courses at Ricoh nature seminars, forest seminars, and Ricoh Company Meetings. In the elementary courses, we, with the cooperation of NPOs and specialists, teach the importance of ecosystem conservation as well as basic knowledge about planning and organizing volunteer activities. At Ricoh Company Meetings, leaders gain new knowledge, report their activities, and exchange information and opinions with other leaders. In the intermediary courses, we nurture personnel who are able to not only organize activities but also convey to others how such activities work and how much fun they are. Forest seminars aim at nurturing personnel with expertise in forest conservation.



Nature seminar elementary course

Q How do you wish to develop activities?

A We hold regional nature seminars to increase the number of leaders.

We started nature seminars in the Tokyo area, which made it difficult for employees living outside the area to attend. In fiscal 2002, the first seminar in the Kansai area was held at Ricoh Ikeda Plant in Osaka. It attracted employees who were interested in the seminars but were not able to join due to geographical reasons. To ensure that environmental volunteer activities would be carried out after the completion of the seminar, we asked City Hall to provide us with a nearby thicket and invited a member of an NPO taking care of the thicket to give a lecture. After completing the seminar, the participants formed their own group, called Green Conductor, and they are continuing their activities. We plan to continue holding regional nature seminars, and in fact seminars are scheduled to be held in the Shikoku, Kanto, and Kansai areas in fiscal 2005. Networks with various administrations and NPOs throughout the country will be developed with leaders playing a central role, which will lead to more extensive environmental volunteer activities.

Employee feedback

INTERVIEW

Message from an Environmental Volunteer Leader



Kiyoko Iwamoto
Business Assistance Center,
Business Planning Division,
Rico Electronics Devices
Company, Ikeda Plant

“Having met like-minded people at a nature seminar, I began to actively take part in voluntary programs.”

Nature seminars gave me the opportunity to act on my own initiative.

I have always liked hiking and mountaineering as well as drawing the plants I see and learning their names. When I started thinking about nature and life, I learned that Ikeda Plant, the place I work, was going to hold a nature seminar. Being interested in

volunteer activities, I decided to join the seminar. I was pleasantly surprised to discover myself among so many people that shared the same interest. We became friends at the get-together for the seminar, talked about what we could do, signed up members, and launched a volunteer group.

Calling for employees' participation in environmental activities

It has been two years since we began our activities on Mt. Satsuki. We manage bamboo forests and



maintain hiking paths as well as teach how to make baskets using vines. By posting a notice with photos at our workplace to invite new members to our activities, we successfully attracted new members. Our members also include local citizens. I would like to continue our efforts to provide people with the opportunity to enjoy nature.