

The importance of understanding and helping each other -- my insights from my career #2 (Click [here](#) for #1)



Margaret Hoagland, VP of Global Sales and Marketing at SIOS Technology Corp.

Margaret, the VP of the global sales and marketing department, says that there is a culture of mutual respect at SIOS Technology Corp. We asked Margaret why this is so and what challenges the company faces in the future.

Respect and trust that members have for each other

- What is the workplace atmosphere at STC?

Margaret: STC is small, with only about 50 employees, so everyone knows each other well and there is a family atmosphere.

STC is more interested in investing in human resources than the average U.S. company, and this attitude has been passed on to its employees. Perhaps because of this, some employees have been with the company for 15-20 years. In the U.S., where changing jobs is the norm, many of our employees have been with us for a relatively long time.

The kickoff meeting for the marketing and sales teams at the beginning of the year was the first in-person meeting since the pandemic. We are a small team of several people, and it was the first time in a long time that all members had met face-to-face. Working remotely can sometimes be lonely. Through the meeting where we all came together, we were able to deepen our mutual understanding of how we work and how we overcame challenges. It is also a very valuable opportunity for us to cultivate teamwork and make sure we are supporting each other.

- If you had to describe STC in one word, what would it be?

Margaret: Respect. We also value Integrity, Honesty, Collaboration. Mutual respect is not only between employees, but also with customers and sales partners. As I have mentioned, I believe this from my

experience of seeing many different workplaces. I feel that SIOS Values*¹ are truly rooted in the company.

- What, if any, efforts are being made to foster culture?

Margaret: I feel that teamwork and collaboration have become more active since Masahiro Arai took over as COO in 2020.

For example, we strive to create an atmosphere where it is easy to speak up even when differing opinions make it difficult to speak up at meetings and to maintain an environment where people can express their opinions to each other. If there is an attitude of respect even for differing opinions, it is easier for people to honestly confide what they are thinking.

Arai also often says, "Think about things from a different angle and look for breakthrough ideas and new solutions. It is difficult for one person to solve a complex problem or create a new solution, but if we all take on a challenge together, the possibility of creating something new increases.

- How do you deal with conflicts of opinion or deadlocked problem-solving?

Margaret: In such situations, we discuss thoroughly. We look for the underlying cause, "What is the cause?" Sometimes we ask other departments because our own perspective may be only one aspect of the event or symptom. Once we find the cause of the problem, we will consider how we can solve the problem to everyone's satisfaction.

- Perhaps it is this environment of mutual respect and discussion that has led to the award of "Best Places To Work in South Carolina" for three consecutive years. Now, the last question. Please tell us about your future challenges.

Margaret: There are many challenges, but first of all, we need to build stronger relationships with our sales partners. It is also important to strengthen cooperation with SIOS Technology (Japan). Although the markets in Japan and overseas are different, we share some common problems and exchange information on a regular basis. Understanding the differences in our business environments has made our collaboration smoother than ever, but I would like to build an even better relationship.

I would like to challenge myself to provide support to my colleagues.

I used to ask myself what I needed and what I lacked in order to increase my market value and contribution to the organization. The answer I found was that I was not challenging myself enough. Repeating the same thing over and over again in the same way will not open the way.

I have continued to find new opportunities and challenges, but I could not have done it without the support of understanding supervisors and colleagues around me. It is difficult to keep working in a senior management role due to various factors such as childcare. It is important to understand each other's environment and help each other. Now that my child is grown, I have taken on much more responsibility at work. Now I want to support the challenges around me. I also hope to pass on what I have learned.

Teamwork is important in business. I believe that organizations can be more wonderful when we support each other.

*¹ SIOS Values: The values of the SIOS Group are clearly stated and consist of the five key words "Creativity, Passion, Commitment, Integrity, and Teamwork," each with its own action guidelines. Each of the five keywords clearly defines the guidelines for action.