

Yoji Akao – 1928-2016

It is with deep regret that the *TQM* journal has to report the death of Japanese Quality Guru Yoji Akao on 24 October 2016.

Yoji Akao is most famous for being the Co-founder of quality function deployment (QFD) and Hoshin Kanri. The Quality Function Deployment Institute (QFDI) has set up an online Memorial book at: http://qfdi.org/notes/akao_memoriam.html for friends, acquaintances and supporters to record their condolences.

This website also covers his many achievements in a life devoted to quality improvement. His contribution to *TQM* over the years has been immense and he will be profoundly missed.

We first met Yoji Akao in 2001 at the Sixth International Conference on TQM and ISO (ICIT) held at the Paisley University in Scotland. We attended a keynote he gave on QFD. Afterwards he took time to have his photographs taken with us. He was always happy and smiling, including on a subsequent countryside trip. Another great memory is his singing at the 12th ICIT in Taiwan in 2007. We also met him at the 13th ICIT in Malaysia in 2008 when he was accompanied by Catherine Chan, the President of the Hong Kong QFD Association. Once again he made time to chat via Catherine and he was very patient with the photographs. He was a legend and inspiration.

His loss is massive for the TQM field.

The thoughts and prayers of all of us involved with the *TQM* journal are with his family at this difficult time. May he rest in peace.

Alex Douglas and Stanislav Karapetrovic

