

Toyota closes elevators to save money

10th July, 2016



The car company Toyota is shutting down two elevators at its global headquarters to save money. The world's largest automaker said on Thursday it will shut down two of eight elevators at its main

Tokyo office. This is to save electricity and to cut down on the costs of operating the building. One reason for this new move is the strengthening Japanese yen. The yen has become much stronger since the UK voted to leave the EU on June the 23rd. One dollar bought nearly 120 yen in January; now it buys just above 100. A stronger yen means Toyota cars sold overseas are more expensive and profits go down. Toyota's profit for the year ending March 2016 was a record ¥2.31 trillion, which is around \$23 billion.

A Toyota spokeswoman said the company decided to shut down the elevators several weeks ago because of the rising yen. The company is also adjusting the temperature of air conditioners to save money. The spokeswoman said Toyota took similar cost-cutting measures after the financial crisis that happened in September 2008. That also made the yen strengthen against the dollar. The spokeswoman said: "These policies are not new." She added: "The key objective for the stoppage of elevators specifically is to raise awareness amongst employees, and to remind them of the commitment that Toyota has towards the idea of increasing competitiveness through staying lean and reducing waste."

Sources: wsj.com / bbc.com / rt.com

Writing

No one should ever use an elevator to go up or down one or two floors. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

elevators / global / headquarters / electricity / yen / overseas / profits / billion / spokeswoman / adjusting / temperature / air conditioners / financial crisis / employee

True / False

- The carmaker Toyota is shutting down two elevators to save money. T / F
- There are eight elevators in Toyota's headquarters in Tokyo. T / F
- A reason for Toyota closing elevators is the stronger Japanese yen. T / F
- Toyota made a profit of \$2.31 billion in the year ending March 2016. T / F
- Toyota decided to shut down the elevators several months ago. T / F
- Toyota is also adjusting air-con temperatures to save money. T / F
- A spokeswoman said the key objective was to save money. T / F
- The spokeswoman said the company does not want to be lean. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| 1. shutting | a. actions |
| 2. global | b. exit |
| 3. operating | c. a number of |
| 4. leave | d. running |
| 5. record | e. closing |
| 6. several | f. aim |
| 7. adjusting | g. workers |
| 8. measures | h. best performance |
| 9. objective | i. modifying |
| 10. employees | j. worldwide |

Discussion – Student A

- Should elevators not stop for just one or two floors?
- Should governments set a limit on air conditioner temperatures?
- What do you know about the financial crisis of 2008?
- How can we get people to use elevators less?
- What do you do to save energy?
- Will you use the elevator less often from now?
- What things do you waste every day?
- What questions would you like to ask the boss of Toyota?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. at its global | a. crisis |
| 2. cut down on the costs of | b. overseas |
| 3. One dollar bought | c. of air conditioners |
| 4. Toyota cars sold | d. yen |
| 5. profit for the year | e. headquarters |
| 6. because of the rising | f. amongst employees |
| 7. adjusting the temperature | g. nearly 120 yen |
| 8. the financial | h. objective |
| 9. key | i. ending March 2016 |
| 10. raise awareness | j. operating the building |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of Toyota for closing two of its elevators?
- How important are elevators?
- Why do people use an elevator to go up or down one floor?
- How much money do you think Toyota will save?
- What happens when the dollar becomes stronger or weaker?
- What do you know about the Japanese yen?
- How will the world change because the UK is leaving the EU?
- What do you think of Toyota cars?

Spelling

- at its global aaugesethrdr
- save tecyrecilti
- the costs of operating the uniibldg
- tnnteehsirngng Japanese yen
- cars sold soaevrse
- fporit for the year ending March
- eaveslr weeks ago
- tnidagujs the temperature
- after the iaanfincl crisis
- The key tijobevece
- raise ssarwanee amongst employees
- staying lean and cenigudr waste

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. j	3. d	4. b	5. h
6. c	7. i	8. a	9. f	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Kettles

You think kettles are the easiest things to use less of. Tell the others three reasons why and how. Tell them why we can easily use less of their things. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): TV, electric lights or washing machines.

Role B – TV

You think TV is the easiest thing to use less of. Tell the others three reasons why and how. Tell them why we can easily use less of their things. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): kettles, electric lights or washing machines.

Role C – Electric lights

You think electric lights are the easiest things to use less of. Tell the others three reasons why and how. Tell them why we can easily use less of their things. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): TV, kettles or washing machines.

Role D – Washing machines

You think washing machines are the easiest things to use less of. Tell the others three reasons why and how. Tell them why we can easily use less of their things. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): TV, electric lights or kettles.

Speaking – Use less

Rank these with your partner. Put the easiest things to use less of at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| • electric lights | • kettles |
| • air con / heating | • fridges |
| • washing machines | • cars |
| • mobile phones | • TV |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.