



HELLO OKAYA

OKAYA INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE ASSOCIATION

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This newsletter is distributed four times a year by the Okaya International Exchange Association, with the aim of providing local foreign residents with information necessary for daily life, as well as insight into aspects of Japanese culture. Please feel free to contact us with your feedback or any questions you may have.

Laid-off Temp Workers

International Round Table Discussion

OIEA successfully held the annual International Round Table Discussion at the Okaya City Iif Plaza Culture Center last February 15th.

For four years now, the round table discussion has been attracting a lot of people from different countries to come together and exchange ideas and opinions on a very contemporary issue that affects our everyday lives.

The global recession that began with the severe business slump in the industries last autumn caused serious problems to workers, especially to temporary laborers who were terminated or cut-off from the workforce. In light of this current issue, this year's topic of discussion centered on "Laid-off Temp Workers."

Eighteen people from six countries (South Korea, Brazil, Indonesia, Philippines, China and Japan) participated in the event that lasted for about two and a half hours. Each panelist talked about their current living and working conditions and their views on the issue at hand. Representatives from Brazil and Philippines raised their concern about the lack of other employment opportunities after they have been laid off. Most of them also expressed their worries about losing their homes. A currently employed Brazilian national even said that he was not sure how long his company could keep him considering the economic uncertainty. He was not sure if he would have a job until spring season.

There is a strong opinion that many jobs for foreigners exist because there are available agency temp jobs and that without these temp jobs, it would be difficult to enter the workforce in Japanese society.

On the other hand, some argue that, "these agency temp jobs are used to maximize business efficiency by cutting labor cost (of retaining permanent employees), thus the expendable nature of the job, becomes a disadvantage." "The merit of this system ultimately becomes its demerit." "It is like walking on thin ice."

Talking about their country's economic outlook and employment situation, the panelists from South Korea and Indonesia said that theirs fare worse than Japan, but work-sharing programs and other economic countermeasures have helped them survive the recession. On a more personal level, they said that, someone who is in need in their society could always seek help from the people around him.

Participants concluded that "if employment condition worsens and causes serious problems for families, (e.g. not being able to send their children to school), one should take a more proactive approach in dealing with the problem." One counseled "foreign residents to improve their Japanese language skills, to better equip them while living in Japan."



★JAPANESE SPRING TRADITION ~One Point Japanese Culture~

Vernal Equinox Day (Shunbun-no-hi)

Vernal Equinox Day occurs around March 21st when the night and day are approximately equally long. In Japan, it is designated as a national holiday and is spent visiting family graves and holding family reunions. The seven-day period, including the three days immediately before and after Vernal Equinox Day, is called the spring equinoctial week (*higan*). In Buddhism, *higan* indicates "the next world" or "paradise", and during this time even non-Buddhist pay visits to family graves. They clean up the gravesites,

offer flowers and incense to remember their departed loved ones.

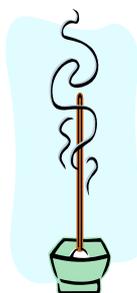


Equinoctial Weeks (*higan*)

Higan occurs twice a year and each lasts one week, with the Vernal and Autumn Equinox Days occurring in the middle of their respective weeks.

In Buddhist terms, *higan* means "the other side of the river crossed by the dead," which means that, while this side is the world of the living, the other side is the world of the dead.

It is believed that in order to comfort spirits of the ancestors on the other side, people make visits to graves during *higan*. It is generally called "*ohigan*," with the prefix "o" to make it sound polite.



Hina Doll/Doll's Festival (*Hina-ningyo/Hina Matsuri*)

Hina are small dolls for girls and have existed since the Heian Period. They took their present form in the Edo Period.



A "doll Emperor and Empress in ancient costume," patterned after the Emperor and Empress, are placed on the highest tier of a five-or seven-tiered stand covered with a red carpet, and under them come the "Minister of the Right, Minister of the Left", the "three court ladies," and the "five court musicians," among others. However, in recent times, more and more homes have simplified this by setting out only the Emperor and Empress dolls.

Doll's festival, which takes place on March 3, is a day to wish girl's growth and happiness. Most families with girls make offerings of peach blossom, *hina arare*, and *hishi-mochi* to dolls. This festival traces its origins to an ancient Chinese custom in which hina dolls were set adrift on rivers, taking impurities and misfortune with them. When this practice spread to Japan, it was linked to girls playing with dolls and the festival has been taking place since the Edo period.

-Getting employed in Japan-

Foreign nationals who are seeking jobs in Japan should be aware that most hiring companies require a Japanese curriculum vitae (CV)/resume. After submitting the CV comes the interview process. It is important to know that not only spoken Japanese, but written Japanese is also essential as well as research and proper preparation when aiming for a job in Japan.



Writing a Standard Japanese CV/Resume

【Before writing】

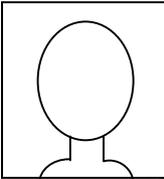
1. Buy the standard CV forms from the convenience store or supermarket. There are various kinds of commercial CV forms available: for general purpose, mid-career or part-time employment. Choose the most appropriate one for you.
2. An ID photo is a standard requirement for a Japanese CV. You can have one taken at any photo booth. Wear a suit, face forward and do not open your mouth when you have your picture taken.
3. Use a black pen and write legibly. Avoid using correction ink and practice using a different paper or use a pencil to write a draft.
4. Sample CV Entry

Write in hiragana if "Furigana" is spelled using hiragana characters, or write in katakana if "Furigana" is spelled in katakana characters.

The date when you submit your CV or the date when you send it by post.

Cut the photo evenly into 3cm X 4cm, making sure that it is properly aligned when pasted on the CV. Wear formal attire, keep your hair neat and try to project a positive appearance.

April 15, 2009

Furigana ちえりー ほわいと		
Name Cherry White		
Date of Birth	Taisho • Showa • Heisei Year 52 May 15 Age: 31	Sex M • F
Mobile No.	080-8888-8888	Email whitefields@hireme.com
Furigana おかやし さいわいちょう		Tel. (0266)
Current Address: Zip Code 394-0029		24-3266
8-1 Saiwaicho, Okaya City		Fax (0266)
		24-3269
Furigana		Tel.
Contact Address: (Fill this out if you want to be reached at a different address)		Fax

Year	Month	Education and Employment History
Education		
1990	April	Nantoka High School (Start)
1993	March	Nantoka High School (Graduation)
1993	April	Nantoka University (Start)
1997	March	Nantoka University (Graduation)
Employment History		
1998	May	Maguronarudo Inc. (Start) – Dispatched by Employment Agency
2000	April	– same as the above company – (Completion) End of Contract
2000	May	Ebson Corp. – Part-time employment in Manufacturing
2000	Dec	– same as the above company – (Completion)
- nothing follows -		

Write only the kanji portion.

Write the Education and Employment History separately. In a Japanese CV, the most recent experience is written at the bottom. (Chronological order from the oldest to the most recent.)

Although, the year should be written in its Japanese calendar form, western calendar year is also acceptable.

Generally, part-time jobs are not recognized as employment experience, but it wouldn't hurt to write such experience anyway.

Year	Month	Licenses and Credentials
2001	May	Holds a Type 1 Regular Vehicle Driver's License
2007	Dec	Passed the Japanese Language Proficiency Test – Level 1

Commuting Time: Approx. 40 min.	Number of Dependents Excluding Spouse: 0	Married? Yes • <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	Does spouse have dependents? Yes • <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Closest Train Station: Okaya Station			

Special Skills / Hobbies / Area of Specialty

Strong language (English, Japanese, Portuguese) and computer skills.
Hobbies include PC assembling and troubleshooting.
Avid tennis-player (since high school days).

Reason/Motivation for Applying

I have spoken with one of your managers at a job fair and I find your company's high technological reputation very appealing.
I would like to use my experience living in the US and my language skills to advance into a US-related career

Desired Preferences
(Write here if you have any preferred field, job type, working hours, work location etc.)

Job Type: IT Administration in the company
Work Location: Okaya City

Guardian (if applicant is a minor) Furigana		Tel. () -
Name	Address	Fax () -

Write down all your credentials and licenses in chronological order starting from the oldest to the most recent. Include the ones you obtained from Japan and from your home country as well. Doing so will show that you are knowledgeable in such field. List down all credentials, even the ones that appear to be non-related to the position you are applying for.

The closest train station to your house

Write down your motivation in your own words. (It would be very convincing, if you define your goals and desired objectives based on your previous experience.

If you have any, you can write your preferred job type, work location, etc. here.

Job Interview Tips

【Attire and Grooming】

You can't go wrong with gray, navy blue, shades of black or any dark colors when it comes to your interview attire. More than fashion style itself, you should put more importance on proper hygiene. Of course you don't need to be reminded that you should check your clothes in front of the mirror. Pay attention to your hair, fingernails and footwear. Avoid wearing thick makeup, strong perfume/cologne and high heels.



【Pre-interview Research】

Nothing communicates disinterest like a candidate who hasn't bothered to do pre-interview research. Knowing nothing about the company you are interviewing for is not only disrespectful, but reflects poorly on you. On the flip side, the quickest way to a good impression is to demonstrate your interest with a few well thought out questions that reflect your knowledge of their organization. Use the internet to search for the company's profile and other pertinent information. Showing your interest creates a good interview environment and makes for a smooth conversation.



【Interview Preparation】

Your interview will likely depend on the CV/Resume you sent beforehand. Make sure that you have a copy on-hand and that you read it again so you don't forget any important detail. Practice a simple self-introduction and prepare some answers to common questions.

【Final Check】

There is absolutely no excuse for arriving late to the interview. However, showing up too early often creates a poor first impression as well. It is probably best to arrive 5-10 minutes before the appointed time. Try to determine beforehand the location of the interview, what kind of transportation to take and the estimated travel time. Confirm the name and rank of the person in charge of the interview and check that you have the necessary documents before you go.



INFORMATION

Japanese Language Classes

For a year now, Okaya International Exchange Association (OIEA) has been conducting Japanese Language Lessons to help foreign residents cope with their daily life here in Japan.

This spring, we will start a new course on reading and writing in Japanese. This is highly recommended to people who are good at conversing in Japanese but lacking in writing skills.

Enrollment is free!

We have morning and evening classes to meet the needs of very busy people.
So come and join us learn Japanese!



Japanese A: MONDAY EVENING CLASS

3F Culture Center If Plaza
7:00 to 8:30 PM

	4/6	4/13	4/20	4/27	5/11	5/18	5/25	6/1	6/8	6/15
Reading and Writing Course	Training Room 2	Training Room 2	Meeting Room 1	Training Room 2	Meeting Room 1					
Conversation for Beginners	Meeting Room 1	Meeting Room 2	Meeting Room 2	Meeting Room 1	Meeting Room 2					



Japanese B: WEDNESDAY MORNING CLASS

Okaya City Hall 301A (3F), 401B (4F), 602 & 605 (6F)
9:00 to 10:30 AM

	4/8	4/15	4/22	5/13	5/20	5/27	6/3	6/10	6/17	6/24
Reading and Writing Course	605	301A	401B							
Conversation for Beginners		605	602	602	602	602	602	602	602	602

Call 0266-24-3226 to enroll

