

# Staying in Japan

NTT offers free services for informing people of your new number and checking if your new home has a telephone line. Call the toll-free English Info Service (0120) 364-463.

Fill in a tenkyo todoke form at the post office, and get your mail forwarded to your new address, free of charge, for up to a year.

Call the electric and gas companies and your nearest water service station at least 2-3 days ahead of your scheduled departure date. They will want to know your name and address, the date of your move, your new address, and your customer number. Have the meters read on the day of your move, so that you do not incur any charges thereafter.

Should you wish to change your bank, inform your current branch and pay off any outstanding bills that are usually directly debited.

If you are moving to a new area, your health insurance card must be returned to the ward or city office where you previously resided.

Be sure to register your change of address within 14 days of moving to your nearest ward office or city hall.

# On going native

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## Moving on, in Japan

*Lisa Leger was an ALT with the JET Programme in Nagano-ken for three years. She is now working as an ALT in a base school, independently of the JET Programme.*

I can remember my apprehension in coming to Japan. I was leaving a job I loved and entering unknown territory. Starting something new, however, this was what made it all so exciting. I was yearning for something different. Or perhaps I was trying to break away from the inevitable pattern of aging that my friends were so eagerly displaying: university, good job, marriage and children. After seeing most of my friends reach the fourth rung on that ladder, I suddenly realised I wanted to experience so much more before I settled down. Then, a year in Japan seemed like a very long time. My father, thinking he knows me better than myself, stood waving at the airport gate saying, "See you in three years." I quickly consoled my mother, whose eyes grew wet at the thought, and once again assured everyone I'd be home in just a short 12 months.

Three years have passed, and I'm assuming that I will now hear those four dreaded words, "I told you so." The last time I flew back to Canada for a visit, I imagined it was my final flight and I was returning home for good. Even though I had some interviews lined up at home, I could not help thinking that I was leaving something undone, unfinished. I decided to stay longer in Japan in order to try to master Japanese.

Trying to explain my reasons for wanting to stay to people back home, let alone my friends on the JET Programme, is rather difficult. Perhaps my friends in Canada think I have found an idyllic island of paradise comparable to Di-Caprio's untouched Thai Island in *The Beach*. On the other hand, I fear my western friends here in Japan pity me; thinking my life in Canada must have been so horrid that I am forced to graciously accept Japan as my new home. Of course, neither of these reasons is true. I do look forward to returning back to Canada someday, when I am convinced I have learned enough about Japan. There is the trick, however. As a philosopher once said, "The more you learn, the more you realise your ignorance." My interest in Japan grew from mild fascination, "Oh, look at the cute painted

potholes!” into a determination to master kanji.

I like the idea of learning something new everyday. And I am amazed at the things that I learn now, even after being here for so long. Here are a few tips to help you make your decision:

### **Why do you want to stay? What is your plan for the future?**

We have all heard this type of question before. Remember when you were applying for university and everyone kept asking “why? why? why?” Some of you self-assured souls responded, to the sound of guaranteed ‘oohs’ and ‘ahh’s,’ ”I’m going to be a (insert anything that makes your parents proud)”. The rest of us, however, quickly tried to establish some career goal, while repressing the urge to blurt out, “Because all my friends are going.”

Now that we are much older, surely we have chosen a clear-cut career path. Ahem, right? It’s a good idea to do some soul searching into your reasons for staying, before the inevitable questions come flooding. A good old list of pros and cons might be helpful. But don’t forget to trust your gut instinct.

Although it is a good pro point, money should not be your sole reason for staying in Japan. We spend approximately 70% of our lives working: Spending your time at a great paying job you hate is not worth it.

### **So I’ve made my decision, now what?**

Spread the good news and tell everyone you know. A great way to get a job in Japan is through word of mouth. Do not underestimate the power of your western friends either. Some companies are too daunted to read your English CV carefully, and will ask a fellow foreign worker for help in making a decision. If you want to make an even better impression, fill out a Japanese 履歴書, *rirekisho* (CV). These can be purchased at most book and stationary stores, and include instructions, an envelope, and a chart listing the Japanese imperial years. Although your kanji writing skills may be somewhat shaky, the interviewers will definitely appreciate the effort! Hand in the *rirekisho* along with your English CV and cover letter. Don’t forget to attach a big smiley photo!

Start early! Remember the yearlong process that brought you to the JET Programme? Things take time in Japan. Keep in mind that many new openings start in April; so be sure to ask about starting

dates to avoid any conflict with your current contract.

If you love Japan and hate teaching, there are other jobs out there. Many native English speakers work as secretaries, accountants, engineers, translators, and in the fashion and tourism industries etc. Do not let your fear of not being fluent in Japanese hinder you from applying.

Your willingness to learn, coupled with what you have learned thus far, may be all you need. Face facts! In whatever capacity you decide to stay on, you may very well end up on a lower pay scale than what you received as a JET. Besides the pay, other things you may have to wave goodbye to are: subsidised rent; a caretaker who actually cares; long vacations; 9-5 workdays; and such comforting daily rituals as doing the crossword and writing letters at your desk. Governmental red-tape issues, such as renewing your visa and paying your taxes back home, will not be waived just because you are new to playing this game alone. These things will be your responsibility. Be sure not to forget, otherwise you will have plenty of time in prison to figure out all the paperwork.

Changing jobs is difficult anywhere. It is natural to have some doubt about any big decision. Approach whatever you decide on with the same optimistic outlook you had when you first joined JET, and you are sure to enjoy a new adventure. I still have some uncertainties about starting another year in Japan and a new job. But if it does not work out, then it is only a short 12 months.

### **The universe outside: Beyond English teaching**

*Richard Ruth is living proof that you can make it in Japan as something besides an English teacher. Daring to differ, he runs a dive shop in Okinawa. Here he offers us some insight into how to get to where he is at now*

Ever seen one of those dive-masters on the boat, or the guy taking divers out, looking so cool and with it, behind those dark shades and that great tan? Ever wondered what it takes to have the world in your palm like that, to get paid to dive, to lay around on the beach all day every day? Well, here it is, your straight road to living that life.

### **The first question is how do you do it in Japan?**

The simple answer is persistence. The first thing you need is to be

a qualified diving instructor with a recognised Diver Training Agency. This requires taking the prerequisite courses in Advanced Diving and Rescue Diving, a Dive master course, and then, of course, the Instructor Course. Most agencies require that you have been a diver for at least a year, and have 100 dives under your belt. But check with whatever agency you are interested in qualifying with to find their prerequisites. Then you have to find a dive shop willing to take you on to teach English speakers in Japan (unless you speak enough Japanese to teach in Japanese) how to dive.

If you do speak enough Japanese to teach diving, then you will have no problems finding work, because everyone will want a gaijin to attract business to their shop. If not, don't let anyone tell you there is no English-speaking business in Japan. There are plenty of English speaking divers. You may just have to work a bit harder to find them.

If you are any nationality besides American, you can get a working holiday visa from the Japanese government in a matter of hours. If you are American, the best way to stay is to find an individual or business to sponsor you. In order to make this happen, you need to have a skill no Japanese person has (being able to teach diving in English is a great start!). Then, once your paperwork is approved, put the word out that English speaking dives and diving classes are available. This can be done through a variety of media: English magazines, international clubs and organisations, and word of mouth are good places to start.

You will find most Japanese dive shops dive in a very Japanese way. They are very controlling; limit your time, and always dive the same spots. Be ready to convince the boss that foreigners are strong divers and can do more than some of the Japanese divers can. Foreign divers tend to want more time underwater and like more challenging dives. This is difficult for most Japanese to comprehend, and will be an uphill battle for a while. Again, be persistent, things will get a little easier after the boss is comfortable with a foreign diving style. That is when the fun begins. You get to dive everyday; meet cool, exciting people; and be the envy of all those bods who have to work in an office all day, everyday. <http://www.diveokinawa.com>

## **Gaisen & rice queens: alternative lifestyles in Japan**

*Jeff Dobbins is a member of the Japan Stonewall group.*

Whether you are gay, lesbian, bi, transgender, (or straight), one of the first things you must decide when you finish JET is whether or not to stay on in Japan. Just because you do not know what to do with yourself, does not necessarily mean you should stay!

Ask yourself the following questions: How have your experiences been to date? Are you back in the closet, feeling frustrated, lonely or isolated? If so, what makes you think any of that will change? If you plan on moving to a large city, speak to someone who already lives there to see how he or she found it. If you crave romance or companionship, do you think that staying will increase your chances of enjoying either?

### **Once you have made your decision to stay**

Clearly there is no one magic formula for happiness for such a diverse group of people as the GLBT community. Many of us succeed precisely because we have overcome the difficulty of being different earlier in our lives. Living in rural Japan, you may crave social interaction with people like yourself. Some of us would love to form a special relationship with someone. While there are exceptions, most gay life in Japan takes place in and around the biggest cities. And if you would like to be a part of it, then these are the places to go. By far the largest gay neighbourhood is Shinjuku 2-chome in Tokyo, which has gay bars catering to both men and women.

In Japan, foreign men have long been associated with AIDS. So, if you do not look Japanese, you may well encounter discrimination, especially in such places as video boxes, saunas and, sometimes, even bars. Often, being able to communicate well in Japanese can open some doors. So, by all means, study and improve your language ability.

As you may be aware, the strict adherence to gendered social roles in Japan carries over into the gay world. So, do not be surprised or offended when people assume you identify either as a 'top' or a 'bottom.' Here are a few words to add to your lexicon. *Tachi* means top (active); *neko* means bottom (passive). In the case of lesbians,

these appellations refer to Butch and Femme respectively. *Gaisen* denotes a Japanese who is primarily interested in foreigners. (The opposite, in English, for non-Asian foreigners who are interested in Asians, is rice-queen). *Debusen* means chubby chaser.

While foreigners who do not speak Japanese may not be welcome at most clubs, there are many clubs that cater to rice-queens and *gaisen* in Shinjuku 2-Chome. One bar in the area, which is more relaxed with regard to the standing and posing, is Arty Farty.

There are a number of websites to meet other GLBT people in Japan. For news of upcoming gay events and news, subscribe to the Stonewall 'Listbox.' For lesbians, there are Dyke weekends, which are organised periodically and are usually well attended. Another source of information is the 'Sparticus Gay Guide,' which lists, among other things, contact groups, societal attitudes, and meeting places for gays in most parts of the world.

If you read Japanese, (a big if, I know), then you will have access to much more information through gay men's magazines, which are available nationally through the *kuroneko* (black cat) courier service. The most popular titles are *G-man* and *Badi*, although *Sabu* and *Barazoku* are popular, too. There is also a gay fashion magazine entitled *Fabulous* (in Katakana) that you may order. Probably the best way to make friends with gay people, in your area of Japan and beyond, is to place an ad in one of these magazines. You will not be alone, as over 1,000 men advertise per month. (You may place the ad in English, too). If you don't understand how to order a magazine or place an ad, (it will only cost you the price of a stamp!), then ask someone to help you.

In the end, with enough information, contacts, and linguistic ability, you will discover that there is a significant gay community out there. For more information about GLBT life in Japan, please contact a Stonewall representative.

### **Further information**

<http://www.gnj.or.jp> is a website and bulletin board offering support and advice to the gay community in Japan.

<http://www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/4248/index.html>

*Coming out in Japan*, Satoru Ito and Ryuta Yanase. trans. F Conlan. Trans-pacific Press, 2001

*Male Homosexuality in Modern Japan: Cultural Myths and Social Realities.* Mark J. McLelland, Curzon, 2000.

*OCCUR* (Japan Association for the Lesbian and Gay Movement, Tokyo)

## **Transition blues**

*Elizabeth M. Bennett was an ALT in Nagasaki and the editor of JET and Beyond 1998.*

More to accomplish in Japan? Staying in Japan after JET can bring a peculiar brand of blues. You may be shocked when you actually decide to do it. Loss of your support group may rattle you, not to mention loss of that monthly cash packet.

In this section, Jill Gribben of TELL, the Tokyo English Lifeline Community Counselling Service, will give us her thoughts on the subject. Gribben has been in Japan since 1969. She began her work with TELL as a volunteer, then trained as a therapist, as which she has been working for two years. She thinks the peak and dip model often referred to when discussing culture shock, while useful, should not be taken too seriously. "To an extent, that model's flow is intrinsic to any experience that is new." she says.

"The model is good not just with (sojourn) experiences, but as a fundamentally natural model of the way we experience change." In hindsight, she can relate personally to the model, "But only over an enormous period of time."

She does not think, as some have suggested, that the stages repeat for years. It could happen." she says, "But it is unlikely. We adapt. The responses would change if it was repeated." For the ex-JET deciding to stay in Japan, this could mean new kinds of stress.

Gribben also has reservations about referring to cultural adaptation in any permanent sense. "This depends upon the individual. If you stay a long time, you change gears. Your cultural adaptation may change, but it is hardly ever permanent." The transition blues have as many manifestations as there are people. So while Gribben thinks it impossible to bypass culture shock completely, one need not be conscious of it, either.

Changing your circumstances within Japan will definitely create some problems. The JET Programme is temporary. We all know this, but taking another job may entail more commitment. You will have no

instant community and of course, very few entry-level jobs pay as well as the JET Programme. When changing gears, you could be strongly challenged, economically and socially, According to Gribben, you may experience this as having to do with being (in Japan), even if it does not.

The motivation to stay is also important. Any commitment should be positive. Taking a job because you feel spooked about the job market at home or are ambivalent about the future is bad. "You may end up feeling trapped, which could provoke problems in relation to Japanese culture," says Gribben.

Staying because of romantic interests also has hazards. Relationships are usually positive in the beginning, but Gribben says the line between person and country may blur when problems arise. Cultural frustrations may be carried into the relationship. If you do stay for a serious relationship, marriage, or that dream job, Japan could become your permanent home. Yet Gribben does not think that this is going native. "Perhaps it is a difficult call," she says, but she has been in Japan for 27 years, feels completely at home, and is still very much a Brit. She is not bicultural and cannot be. "Living in a foreign country does not make you bicultural," she says, "You can stay here 50 years and never absorb the culture."

### **So what if I'm losing it?**

Of course, help is available. Networks of foreigners are common (please see International Groups in Japan later in this section). You can always contact TELL. People have all sorts of reasons to call TELL, but the most common is a feeling of isolation. Perhaps it is as simple as needing to babble awhile in your native tongue.

A lack of family and friends close at hand may leave you feeling unsupported. Many people opt to visit home as often as possible as a way of renewing identity and getting a support booster. While Gribben thinks these trips can be helpful if one feels isolated, they are not necessarily needed. She herself did not go back for 10 years, but, "If it's on your mind a lot, do it." She warns that there is a chance you will play the two places against each other.

The coping strategies that Gribben recommends are simple. First, it is essential to learn the language and learn it well, "A fair degree of fluency is required if you are going to stay more than two or three

years.” Next, although it is important to stay active for general health, do not force yourself to do anything. “If your heart is not in something, doing it is not particularly helpful.” she says, “You may be pushing reality away.” In addition, it is extremely important to allow yourself to be negative, when appropriate. Denial of frustration, irritation and loneliness are nothing but destructive. “Grab another foreigner and have a good bitching session it helps.”

Finally, her most important tip is to discover fresh things about the culture in which you are living: “If your feelings are mixed, try and make contact with some other aspect of Japanese culture. Take a trip, visit a temple, and go to a theatre.” You could stumble upon a new community that makes your post-JET life more interesting.

### **Further information**

<http://www.majic.co.jp/TELLnet/tell> (TELL - Tel: (03) 5721-4347)

TELL - HIV/AIDS Line Tel: (03) 5721-4334.

<http://www2.gol.com/users/andrew/index.html> counselling in Japan  
*Survival Kit for Overseas Living*. Dr.L.Robert Kohl. Intercultural Press.

*Women’s Guide to Overseas Living*. N. J. Piet-Pelon and B. Hornby, Intercultural Press.

*Cross-Cultural Dialogues: 74 Brief Encounters with Cultural Difference*. Craig Sorti, Intercultural Press.

## **Getting married in Japan**

*Tim Morey was a CIR in Aomori Prefecture*

Getting married in Japan is a surprisingly simple process. I work in a city hall. I got all the paper work ready, popped down stairs to get married, and returned before my coffee got cold. It was a full two hours before my excitement overcame me and I phoned my girlfriend to tell her that she was now my wife.

**If your partner is Japanese:** The procedure is the same as above, with the exception being that only you need a certificate of eligibility from your embassy.

**Procedure for non-Japanese:** Two non-Japanese can register their marriage in Japan. Bureaucrats in small towns may try to tell you otherwise, but stay calm and refer them to the Naimusho. My parents did it in 1958 in rural Nagano, I did it in Aomori in 1997, and we

experienced exactly the same problems. The problem being that once registered, the officials normally send your marriage record to your *koseki*, which is the town where your household is registered. However, foreigners do not have a *koseki*, creating a document without a home: a bureaucrat's worst nightmare!

Once you have calmed down from popping the question (or having it popped, and agreeing), call your embassy's consular section. They will give you specific guidelines, which usually entail the following:

- Acquiring certificates of eligibility from your respective embassies. This involves a trip to your nearest embassy or consulate. Procedures vary enormously in cost and time, one of the most bizarre being the British system, where a notice declaring your intention to marry is pinned on the embassy notice board for a month, and barring any objections, an affidavit is then issued. The certificates of eligibility must be translated into Japanese, but your embassy will probably do this for you.
- Going to the city hall's citizen affairs section (*Shiminka*) and getting an application form to get married. This form is in Japanese, and the city is under no obligation to help you fill it in, so you might want to take a Japanese friend along.
- Filling out your information, your partner's information, and then handing the form in. In addition, you will need two witnesses of any nationality to fill in their part of the form and *hanko* it. Be sure to get their addresses, *koseki* and dates of birth.
- Taking the form and the certificates of eligibility to the *konnintodoke* section of the *shiminka*. Once you do this, you will be officially married! The Japanese believe that certain days are luckier than others, so you may want to consult your office if you are superstitious at heart.

### **Some Points**

You can only register your marriage in one country. If you register your marriage in Japan, you must go through your embassy to register it elsewhere. In other words, if you have another marriage ceremony overseas, you cannot register it as a legal wedding. This confused our minister in Canada. Your embassy can tell you about the procedure for getting the marriage registered in your home country.

(You might want to do this if you wish to obtain residency and the right to work in your partner home country). Getting affidavits and other paperwork from the embassy takes time and money so leave plenty of both.

**The Honmusho (Ministry of Justice)**  
1-1-1, Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8977,  
Tel: (03) 3580-4111 web site: <http://www.moj.go.jp>

## **Tying the knot across international borders Japanese husbands, western wives**

*Jenni Borden is an ALT in Nagano-ken and married to a Japanese national. Here she offers us some points to ponder on international marriage.*

If you had asked me before I came to Japan if I thought that I would end up marrying a Japanese man, I would have told you that the stereotypical Japanese man was not my type. Now, we all know that not every man fits into one mould, but marriage? Well, that is an awfully big step.

I am an American ALT in a mountain village in Nagano that has a population of about 3,500. My fiancé, who is the eldest son, will soon take over his family's business, which is based in this village. He speaks limited English, and we depend mainly on Japanese for communication. When the idea of marriage first came up, I knew that many aspects of my life that I enjoyed would change after marriage. So I hesitated. I did not want to fall into the trap of thinking that loving my prospective partner would be enough to keep me happy in a culture that is not my own. I knew support from the surrounding community would be essential. Eventually I decided to go for it. While my foreign friends have been invaluable, it has turned out that Japanese friends have been equally important for their insights into Japanese culture that would be difficult to grasp without their help.

### **Japan forever?**

I was born and raised in a sizeable American city, and JET has been my first taste of living in the countryside. I will miss the fast-paced, bright life of the city, but I can always go visit. Living successfully in a new place depends mostly on mindset. Most of the Japanese that I have met will match my eagerness to learn with their zest to show me the ropes. Do not be afraid to ask about anything that you do not understand. They expect it of us anyway!

Every foreigner has little things that bug him or her about Japanese culture. Do you let them bother you and complain about them constantly? OR do you find a way to cope, become more flexible, and come to terms with things before they blow up into a big issue? The choice is yours. Sometimes it helps to just laugh at those things that annoy you the most!

Once you have made your choice to stay, you will discover how ingenious you can become about overcoming those annoyances. And, if you think about it, you will find things about your own culture that aggravate you, too.

Make sure you discuss where you will live with your future partner. Marrying the eldest son often means sharing a home with him AND his parents. If that is true for you, then will you be able to live happily under the watchful eyes of Mom and Dad? When you make your decision stick with it. You understand your needs the best. We felt that cultural differences had the potential to create a lot of tension and pressure. Home should be a relaxing place where you can retreat and occasionally forget that you're in Japan! We agreed to compromise by building our own home close by the in-laws. Make sure home is somewhere you feel comfortable and can set rules that suit the two of you.

Traditionally, the home is the woman's domain, so there is no custom of men helping with the housework. However, the younger generations of Japanese men are more inclined to help with the cooking and cleaning than their older counterparts. You may want to discuss what kind of arrangement will work best for both of you. Whatever the case, communicate your expectations (and make sure you listen as your partner communicates theirs)!

### **Children**

If you would like children in the future that opens up a whole new range of issues that take some in-depth thinking about, and a good deal of talking about. What sort of medical facilities are available in your area and are you comfortable with them?

The best advice I have been given is to seek out other foreigners who are married and living in Japan, and ask them for information. Chances are they have either been through it, or know someone who

has. The AFWJ [The Association of Foreign Wives in Japan] is a national organisation, whose members have a wealth of experience and information. Tel: (066) 418-9957. There is also the AMDA International Medical Information Centre in Shinjuku that can provide a book and video on the issues surrounding pregnancy and childbirth in Japan.

In the past, many Japanese men did not like their wives working after marriage. The economy and women's desire to work has brought about changes in this way of thinking, but you cannot change a national ideology overnight. It is fully respectable, and not uncommon, for Japanese women to quit their jobs to raise their children (something that has become almost unthinkable in some western countries).

Babysitting is not common here. You may find yourself living close to the grandparents, who would, in many cases, love to watch their grandchildren while you work. Please remember that Grandma and Grandpa's ideas on raising your kids might be very different from your own values and methods. This will inevitably cause problems, which will have to be dealt with delicately.

### **The language challenge**

Plan on being an active language learner for life. Good communication is essential for any couple, but this is especially true for the international couple. Even if your future mate speaks your language impeccably, do not be satisfied, study Japanese. Undoubtedly, there will be language mix-ups. It is important, even when you think you understand or are being understood, to double-check. It's all part of the learning process.

If you need more incentives to learn, then there will also come the day when your children speak perfect Japanese, and you will be frustrated, and potentially isolated, if you can't understand them. Being able to speak Japanese raises your chances of getting along with your in-laws. Remember that being fluent goes beyond words. You have to know the culture inside out as well, so always keep your eyes and ears open!

### **Schooling your child**

Many JET participants are turned off by the Japanese school system due to their own experiences. When your children reach school

age, will you enroll them in your neighbourhood school?

In all things, research your options before you let yourself get discouraged, and before you make your decision. You might find that you are surprised by what is out there. Many major cities can often provide alternative schooling or a way for your kids to mix with other kids of international parentage. Home schooling or partial home schooling is another route you can choose.

### **A few words on home schooling...**

Terrified by the daunting prospect of trying to make an obento that is up to standard? Have nightmares about your fifteen year-old developing a peculiar affinity for Kitty-chan? Or, on a more serious note, maybe you are worried about your child facing prejudice for being different?

People have many different reasons for turning to home schooling. Some of them stem from dissatisfaction with prevalent methods of teaching in the school system. As a Daily Yomiuri article (issue dated September 2, 2000) said, more and more Japanese parents are looking to home schooling as a result of their belief that the Japanese school system fails to develop creative and responsible individuals. Others choose home schooling for more personal reasons. My friends Dan and Tina Junker decided to home school their kids because of their belief in the importance of family relationships and the need to input time into those relationships. They felt that the long school hours common to the Japanese school system would take away valuable family time.

Whatever your reasons you need to be aware that home schooling is not looked upon as progressively here in Japan as it may be in your home country. The Japanese tend to see home schooling as a last resort for “problem kids,” rather than as a valid choice. Furthermore, there have even been cases in Japan of parents being prosecuted under the School Education Law for failing to send their children to school. This is a rarity, and, as the same Daily Yomiuri article pointed out, the law as it stands actually seems to be on the side of the proponents of home schooling. I quote: “while Article 26 states that citizens shall be obligated to have all boys and girls under their protection receive ordinary education, it does not specify where this ordinary education should take place.” Beware of looking at home schooling as the perfect solution to Japan’s educational system. The process creates dilemmas of its own; the most obvious being the fact that taking your children out of the classroom situation reduces their

chances to interact with other people their own age.

To counteract this, and ensure that your children develop socialization skills, you need to encourage their active participation in various clubs and community activities. If you are interested in home-schooling but feel like you need a little bit of help to fill in the gaps in your own knowledge, than the internet is a good resource. There are several online curricula tailored for home schooling. For starters, check out Atmark Learning Inc., Inter-high school and The Christa McAuliffe Academy.

## **International Groups**

Being an ex-pat is not always easy. This list will help you connect with compatriots and with Japanese who want a bit of an international flavour in their lives.

### **The Japan Foundation**

20F/21F Ark Mori Bldg. 1-12-32 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-6021  
Tel: (03) 5562-3511 Web site: <http://www.jpf.go.jp>  
Established in 1972 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to promote international, mutual understanding and friendship

### **Tokyo International Foundation**

11F Tokyo Int'l Forum Bldg.3-5-1 Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku,  
Tokyo 100-0005 Tel: (03) 5221-9000  
<http://www.tif.or.jp/indexe.html>

### **Aomori Foundation for the Advancement of International Relations**

5 F Suisan Bldg. 1-32 Yasukata 1-Chome Aomori City 030-0803  
Tel: (017) 735-2221 E-mail: [affaire@jomon.or.jp](mailto:affaire@jomon.or.jp)  
<http://www.jomon.ne.jp/affair/english/index.html>

### **Kobe International Center for Co-op & Communication**

Kobe Int'l House 20F Goko-dori 8-1-6, Chuo-ku Kobe-shi 651-0087  
Tel: (078) 291-8415 E-mail: [kic02@exd.city.kobe.jp](mailto:kic02@exd.city.kobe.jp)  
<http://www.kobe-sc.tao.go.jp/kia>

### **Kyoto City International Foundation**

2-1 Torii-cho, Awataguchi Sakyo-ku, Kyoto-shi 606-8536  
Tel: (075) 752-3010 E-mail: [office@kcif.or.jp](mailto:office@kcif.or.jp)  
<http://www.kcif.or.jp>

### **Sapporo International Communication Plaza**

MN Bldg. Kita 1 Jo Nishi 3 Chome, Chuo-ku, Sapporo-shi 060-0001

Tel: (011) 211-2105 E-mail: [sicpfexc@poplar.ocn.ne.jp](mailto:sicpfexc@poplar.ocn.ne.jp)

<http://www.tokeidai.co.jp/sicpf>

### **Hiroshima Canada Association**

Chugoku Electric Power Co., Inc.4-33 Komachi, Naka-ku,  
Hiroshima-shi, Hiroshima-ken 730-8701 Tel: (082) 523-6183 E-mail:

[hea@po.cisnet.or.jp](mailto:hea@po.cisnet.or.jp)

<http://www.cisnet.or.jp/home/hca>

### **Shikoku Canada Society**

1-33 Saiwaicho Tokushima-shi, Tokushima-ken 770-0847

Tel: (088) 622-2222

### **International Outreach Association**

1-6-1-203 Chateau Minato-machi, Inari Naniwa-ku, Osaka 556-0023

Tel/Fax: (06) 6567-1667 E-mail: [info@i-o-a](mailto:info@i-o-a) <http://www.i-o-a.org>

### **American Centre Reference Service**

A tool for doing in-depth research on the United States, it also offers the opportunity to meet people interested in America. They have more than 200 US magazines and newspaper titles in hard copy.

### **Nagoya ACRS**

6F Nagoya Kokusai Centre Bldg.47-1 Nagano 1-chome, Nakamura-ku,

Nagoya 450-0001 Tel: (052) 581-8641 E-mail: [america@gol.com](mailto:america@gol.com)

<http://www.usembassy.state.gov/nagoya>

### **Fukuoka ACRS**

Nishitetsu Solaria, Park-side Bldg. 2-2-67 Tenjin, 2-chome Chuo-ku,

Fukuoka 810-0001 Tel: (092) 733-0246

<http://www.usembassy.state.gov/fukuoka>

### **Language links**

<http://www.itl.atr.co.jp>

<http://www.quickscholar.com/index.htm>

<http://members.aol.com/Joyo96/index96.html>

### **Sports**

<http://www.skijapanguide.com/new/links.html>

[http://www.japanreference.com/Sports/Martial Arts](http://www.japanreference.com/Sports/Martial_Arts)

# Visas and Immigration

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## Like a square peg in a round hole

*Jason Hicks was an ALT in Osaka. Now, he is an independent private English teacher.*

Japan's immigration office is legendary among bureaucracies for making the visa process incredibly frustrating. They really like you to fit clearly into one of their categories, and yet they are loathe revealing the exact criteria.

I made the mistake of assuming I had received correct answers the first time I talked to immigration, just because the counsellor had given straight replies to my questions. Some time later, I called again on a couple of points, and ended up with significantly different answers for the same questions. After several more phone-calls and visits, I finally got fed up and went in with my guarantor and a senior member of my *aikido dojo*. It still took half an hour to pin the criteria down clearly!

Perhaps the greatest point in favour of conversation schools and Japanese-language schools is that they will usually take care of this mess for you.

## Immigration requirements

- A guarantor (i.e. somebody who will take legal and financial responsibility for you)
- An activity to keep you busy (work or study);
- For student or cultural visa applicants, somebody to prove in writing that they have set aside 2-3 million Yen to keep you financially viable over the year.

The offices get flooded with applications in June and July, so apply early. Remember if you change your visa status, you may have to leave Japan in order to get your visa changed. Lastly, Immigration will telephone all the people who have vouched for you in your visa application.

## Options if you do not extend your work-visa

- Working Holiday (*wakingu horide*): Perfect, if your country and Japan have such an arrangement. After JET finishes, go home,

get the visa, and come back. You cannot apply for this visa from Japan. The criteria for this visa may vary from consulate to consulate (seriously!), so contact several to find the most accommodating one.

- Cultural Activities (*bunka katsudo*): This visa is for people who wish to devote a lot of time (at least 20 hours per week) to studying something cultural (dance, drumming, martial arts, abacus, etc.). You must be sponsored by an organisation that teaches your desired art or study subject.
- Student Visa: For those of you who wish to study full-time (i.e. at least 20 hours per week) at a Japanese-language school or a Japanese post-secondary institute. Usually the school must be recognised by the government, and will sponsor you.
- Travel Visa. Even JETs from countries where Japan does not normally require entrance visas for temporary visitors, are required to change their status of residence to that of temporary visitor in this case. Apply for a Change of Status of Resident to Temporary Visitor before your current visa expires. You will need an application for a Change of Status of Residence (available at Immigration); a statement of your reasons for requesting the change; a letter from your contracting organisation supporting your travel itinerary and stating the end date of your contract and the date of your intended departure; a valid passport; and your gaijin card.

On the subject of immigration formalities, for an extension of a work visa, you have to submit your passport, alien registration card, a contract, a tax payment certificate, a letter of guarantee, and a statement from your employer (guarantor) as to why you are needed for the job. At the immigration office, fill out two forms, pay ¥4000 and wait four hours. If your employer does not sponsor you (i.e., does not give you any of the above), it is not advisable to work there.

The necessary papers vary from status to status. For information on the specific documents needed you can use the Immigration Bureau's fax service: (03) 3216-3333 (requires the manual function on your fax machine). Also, bear in mind that you must report any changes in your Period of Stay or Status of Residence to your

Municipal Office within 14 days. Should you get married, you must also report changes in your name, nationality, etc. Your Alien Registration Card must record any changes in your alien status.

Most immigration Centres are open  
Monday to Friday from 9:30-12:00, and again from 13:00-16:00.  
<http://www.tokyovisa.co.jp>

## **The Japanese medical system**

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### **An apple a day...**

#### **If you become ill or injured**

If you become ill, choose a hospital or clinic that can provide suitable treatment. Clinics provide mainly outpatient treatment, while hospitals generally provide both outpatient and inpatient treatment. For ordinary ailments, go to a clinic that is appropriate for treating your symptoms. Should you then need more detailed consultation, or should hospitalisation be required, the clinic will provide you with a referral.

#### **Consultation hours**

With the exception of dentists, most medical facilities do not take appointments in advance, and serve patients on a first come first serve basis. Be prepared for a long wait, often between one to two hours.

Consultation hours for outpatients vary, however most hospitals are open all-day weekdays; mornings on Saturdays, and closed on Sundays and national holidays. Make a point of phoning in advance to confirm the consultation hours of the hospital or clinic you wish to visit.

#### **Seeing the doctor**

**Reception *Uketsuke*.** Show your health insurance card at the reception and explain what is wrong with you and the department from which you wish to receive treatment.

In large hospitals, first time patients to every department need to fill out a patient general information form, and wait to be issued a patient ID card from the reception desk. Patients, who have previously visited the department, can attach their ID card to a number and deposit it at the reception desk before proceeding directly to the department to wait for their number to be called. While the doctors listed in this book may be able to communicate with you in your native tongue, the receptionists and nurses may not.

**Cashier *Kaiki*.** After you have been examined proceed to the cashier and pay your assigned fee.

**Pharmacy *Yakkyoku*.** Most hospitals have an in-house pharmacy where you can go and pick up your prescriptions prior to leaving. They are not usually accompanied with directions in foreign languages, so be sure to have someone explain them to you carefully in advance.

### **Emergencies**

Should you need treatment during the middle of the night or on a Sunday or national holiday, proceed to the Emergency Centre nearest you, usually located inside of a major hospital.

Calling an Ambulance: From an ordinary telephone dial 119. When calling from a green phone, merely press the red emergency button at the bottom. No money is required. Say, *Kyu Kyu-sha o onegaishimasu* (I need an ambulance). Give your name, symptoms and location. If possible, have someone wait outside on the street for the ambulance to arrive.

### **Special health checks**

Public Health Centres (*Hokenjo*) are available throughout the Prefecture for consultation regarding pregnancy and childcare, family planning, inoculations and AIDS testing. For more information contact the town office nearest you.

### **Some Important Phone Numbers**

- Medical Information Service, Tokyo (03) 5285-8181  
Counselling and hospital recommendations in English, Korean, Chinese, Thai and Spanish.
- Alcoholics Anonymous, Tokyo (03) 3590-5377
- AMDA International Medical Information Centre,  
Tokyo (03) 5285-8088

- JET Peer Support Group, (0120-71-7761) (8pm-8am)
- CASA: Counselling and Assistance for Students Abroad  
Tokyo (03) 3465-7550
- Rape Crisis Center, Tokyo (03) 3207-3692;  
Wed. 7:00 pm to 10 pm, Sat. 3 pm to 6 pm
- Japan Helpline: 0120-46-1997 (toll free)
- Japan Hotline-Tokyo (03) 3586 0110,  
Weekdays 10:00 am to 4:00 pm
- Japan Allergy Clinic, Tokyo (03) 3591 5464
- Japan HIV Centre/ AIDS Hotline, Tokyo (03) 5259 0256
- The American Pharmacy, (03) 3271 1471

## **Medical Insurance**

There are two major types of health insurance available to foreign residents in Japan: National Health Insurance (*Kokumin Kenko Hoken*) and Employees Health Insurance (*Kenko Hoken*). It is highly recommended that you apply to be covered by one of the two policies.

### **National health insurance**

Foreign Nationals, (including exchange students) who are staying in Japan for one year or longer, can apply for National Health Insurance. Once you become insured, it is not possible to cancel your policy unless your status for eligibility changes.

#### **Coverage**

70% of medical fees are covered by your insurance policy and the remaining 30% will be your responsibility. Medical treatment outside Japan; normal child delivery; physical check-ups; preventative injections, and orthodontics are NOT included under this coverage. If you forget your insurance card and have to pay the full charge for medical treatment, take your receipt, detailed list of medical services and insurance card to the city or ward office, (if you are covered by National Health Insurance); or the company where you work, (if you are covered by Social Insurance).

### **Insurance premiums**

Insurance premiums must be paid monthly. The fee is determined according to your income, number of family members, dependants etc. If you leave Japan or lose your eligibility while the coverage is still valid, the insurance fee allotted per month will be returned.

### **Certificate of insurance**

One certificate is issued per insurance policy. For immediate coverage of medical treatment, you must bring the certificate with you to the hospital or clinic.

### **Employee's health insurance**

All foreign and Japanese workers are eligible for coverage under the Employees Health Insurance Policy, unless the company/organisation you work for does not provide coverage, in which case you may be covered under National Health Insurance.

### **Certificate of insurance**

One certificate is issued per insurance policy. For immediate coverage of medical treatment, you must bring the certificate with you to the hospital or clinic.

## **Best part about getting sick in Japan: hospitals**

*Tammy Junker has had extensive experience of Japanese hospitals during her time here, and has discovered they are not half as bad as they are cracked up to be!*

OK, maybe that is a bit of an overstatement. But my experiences of Japanese hospitals have, so far, been very pleasant. Granted, there are many different hospitals and, just as in any country, you should check one out (if possible!) before checking-in.

My hospital experiences to date have been three stays for pneumonia, childbirth with caesarean section, and a broken leg requiring surgery, in three different hospitals, for a total of 45 days. Of these, two were public hospitals, and one was private. All were pretty big.

### **Don't think you will just have to grin and bear it!**

One key thing to remember, no matter what hospital you go to, if you ask questions and express your desires, (They expect it of us. We are gaijin!), the staff will usually try and accommodate you. However, if you are like most of the Japanese patients, and just accept everything without questions, you should be prepared to just grin and bear whatever you get.

### **Oishii food**

If you like Japanese food, great! Every meal has a good balance and good flavour. It is even pretty healthy. You can also request

*mori* (bigger portions).

### **Staff**

At each hospital I was in, the staff bent over backwards for me because I was foreign. They went so far as to break rules for me, letting my husband be with me for my caesarean operation. My doctor, (a lady), even gave me her own obento at 8pm, when I was hungry and the store was closed. Some nurses have superiority complexes, but most of them genuinely want to help.

They are kind, but also challenge patients to become independent. The doctors were all very good, especially about answering my multitudes of questions. They were also VERY flexible and willing to discuss any reservations I had.

### **Facilities**

Even though buildings may look old and dirty, (though only one of the three I went to was like this), they are still equipped with the latest in medical technology.

### **Private rooms**

(For pneumonia and caesarean section). These are wonderful! Basically, it is like having a hotel room with free room service. You have your own shower, toilet and phone! Everything is a lot more flexible, and it is nice not to worry about roommates or their visitors.

### **Six-person rooms**

These are also pretty nice. Granted, the beds are a little bit closer together than you are probably used to at home. But I actually enjoyed getting to know my roommates. For the better part of my three-week stay I roomed with five ladies between the ages of 65 and 84. I had fun talking with them and it was good Japanese practice!

They always shared their *tsukemono* and fruit, and any other food that their visitors brought along. As I could not leave my bed for part of my stay, roommates were also useful in doing little things for me so I could cut down on the use of the call button. I also added to my extensive collection of *te nugui* (hand towels), as each roommate gives one to everyone when they are discharged. I used it as an opportunity to write little thank you notes to them in English. I am still in touch with one of the ladies on a regular basis.

## **Showers**

There are scheduled days and times for using the communal bath, normally only two or three times a week. But there is also usually a shower room that is open every day from morning to night, and which works on a sign-up basis.

Make sure to ask about it, as I have heard numerous stories of foreigners enduring hospital stays with only two or three baths a week, simply because they did not know there was a shower facility available. Even if you can't physically shower or wash your hair, the nurses will wash your hair in the bed, or take you to a shower with wheelchair access and let you wash your hair there. Don't be shy: these services will only be rendered IF YOU ASK.

## **Moans and groans ...there are some of these too**

### **Strictness**

Japanese hospitals can be very strict. One hospital was very strict about visiting hours, and some of the nurses even chewed me out in front of visitors because they were visiting before official visiting hours.

### **Inconvenience**

In one hospital I had to walk about 30 yards (100 meters) down a corridor to a very old elevator and take it to the first floor to be able to use a rest room big enough to accommodate my unbending leg! On the bright side, it was good exercise.

### **Catching things**

In any hospital it is easy to catch colds from other patients or their visitors. The lack of space in most Japanese hospitals adds to this problem. Although I did not catch anything, it was not too reassuring to find myself in the same wing as the children's ward at the height of the flu season!

### **Overall...**

I found my hospital stays to be bright spots in the midst of physical pain. I actually enjoyed each stay, and was very grateful that they were in no hurry to kick me out! As with everything else about your stay in Japan, if you go at it with a lousy attitude, you will most likely have a lousy time. If you have a positive, flexible attitude, you

may actually even enjoy an experience as bleak sounding as a hospital stay in a foreign country.

## **Men in white coats: dental treatment in Japan**

If you are anything like me then you have an in-built dread of the dentist's chair even in your home country. Never mind the prospect of going to the dentist in Japan and being confronted with a random man in a white coat, aiming a drill at your open mouth, whilst jabbering away at you in Japanese!

So just imagine how I felt when I went to the dentist recently for what I thought was just a regular check-up, and was informed in no uncertain terms that the interior of my mouth needed **SERIOUS** periodontal treatment!

This was not my idea of a fun Wednesday afternoon, but a couple of months later I have survived to tell the tale, and offer a few pointers on dental treatment in Japan.

Although it sounds really obvious, the best way to avoid finding yourself in the situation where, as you watch the dentist's drill come slowly towards your mouth, you are clenching the side of your chair so hard that your knuckles are turning white, is to make regular trips to the dentist! That shouldn't be too difficult to fit in, even if your work schedule resembles that of a Japanese salary man, and you don't see your house from one day to the next. Most dental clinics are open 5 days a week from 8 or 9 am to 7pm. Most also offer either a half-day service on Saturdays, or, are open alternate Saturdays. In the larger cities you can often even attend a night clinic. So there is really no excuse not to use the services of a Japanese dentist.

### **But I don't speak Japanese!**

I kind of cheated on this one and went to a dentist who I knew spoke good English. I found this very reassuring, especially as it meant I knew what he was going to do before he did it, and so did not freak out when he aimed a needle at my mouth. Whether you will feel comfortable going to a dentist who does not speak any English or not all depends on the level of your Japanese.

Medical vocabulary is specific, so even if your Japanese conversation skills are great, that does not mean you can talk at length about root canals and the like. Many dentists in Japan have an

excellent level of English, and if you are going for a check-up you may want to ask around and find an English-speaking dentist in your area. If you cannot find one, or require emergency treatment and there is only a non-English-speaking dentist to hand, never fear. Either take a Japanese friend along, or use some of these to help you get your point across:

Back tooth: okuba	Gums: haguki	Filling: tsumemono
Front tooth: maeba	Nerve: shinkei	Toothache: shitsu
Upper tooth: ue no ha	Tartar: shiseki	Cleaning: kuriiningu
Lower tooth: shita no ha	Cavity: mushiba	Loose tooth: guragura suru
Wisdomtooth: oyashirazu	Denture: ireba	
	To fill: tsumeru	

### **Does the money come out of my own pocket?**

That really all depends on your health insurance policy. But rest secure in the knowledge that most health insurance policies in Japan cover 80% of any costs you might incur for any sort of periodontal treatment. This includes cleaning; removal of tartar; fillings; dentures; crowns and extractions.

(Though please keep in mind that if you want a gold or porcelain filling instead of the generic amalgam equivalent, the difference will come out of your pocket). It does NOT include braces or implants. To claim from your health insurance, simply present your health insurance booklet to the reception desk when you check-in.

### **Is my dental treatment going to break the bank?**

Basic scaling and cleaning fees are minimal. The patient is charged ¥372 for the dubious pleasure of going to the dentist in the first place (*shoshinryo*). The treatment fee is then added on top. You can expect to pay from your own pocket, on average, about ¥400 for an amalgam filling; ¥1,500-¥1,700 for a cap on a crown tooth; ¥3,300 for a cover on a front tooth; ¥1,000 for a metal inlay filling, and ¥4,600 for dentures. However, it is advisable to consult a hospital or clinic about available services and costs before you go.

### **But I've forgotten my health insurance book!**

In the bureaucracy nightmare that is Japan, you might expect

this to be a HUGE problem. But actually it's not.

Simply pay 100% of the costs for the dental treatment from your own pocket. BEWARE: Some clinics will ask you to pay up to 100% of the costs AGAIN as indemnification, which will be returned to you on presentation of your health insurance book. Then at the nearest available opportunity take your health insurance book to the clinic and reclaim back the 80% that you are entitled to.

## **Droppin' yer tackle**

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### **A home away from home**

*Sarah Cummings has been living and working in Japan for so long she is almost a native! She is currently working as the Managing Director of the Masuichi-Ichimura Sake Brewery in Obusedo, Nagano-ken.*

Living and working in Japan is a lot like being a castaway on a remote island in the Pacific (not unlike the hit series Survivor). If you do not actively adapt to the environment, the food, the culture, and the people; you will end up either going home, or staying and missing out on what can be a thrilling adventure. Each situation is unique, and what worked for me may not work for you. But, there are certain traits common to people who are successful here.

### **Be independent**

Be willing to journey off on your own. Get lost and find your way back again. When you are on your own it is easier to meet people, and people are more open to you. Determination and will power, along with stamina and positive thinking are essential, because you will need to create your own position within the community and within a company.

### **Network!**

Make business cards for yourself so that you can exchange cards with people you meet. Often if you do not give a card you will not receive one, and that makes it difficult not only for you to remember people, but also for them to remember you. Meeting people is important not only for opening business opportunities, but also for personal growth.

The best jobs are not advertised, because they are subsequently built and moulded to your skills. Most good jobs in Japan are found through a network of acquaintances, as opposed to in the help-wanted ads. (This is where your network of friends comes in useful for other things besides just being good friends). Ask friends and acquaintances if they know of any openings.

When you approach a company, despite what you may have heard it is not necessary to have a formal introduction. Best to show that you can stand on your own two feet, and represent yourself. Similarly, do not let the fact that the job description indicates that they want to hire someone with a Master's degree put you off. There have been countless cases of people landing the job they wanted, without having the specified qualification.

### **Do not expect too much too soon**

Building trust requires time and consistent hard work. Starting salary isn't as important as a job that allows growth. A better-paying dead-end job is still a dead-end job. Expect to climb slowly up the job ladder. When you are hired, do more than what is required of you.

Do not think that any job is beneath (or above) you. I did not walk into the job that I have now: It is a position that I have built up over time with a lot of hard work and struggle. My personal range has been from picking up trash and pulling weeds, to dining with royalty.

### **Invest in yourself!**

You are your own biggest asset. Your time and experience in Japan is something that you will take with you wherever you go. Do not focus on short-term financial gains: rather devote time and money to yourself. This means travelling and buying books and other materials that will enhance your time here. Instead of teaching another English class on the side, take a Japanese, Aikido, or Ikebana class. Or even a computer course. Do not limit yourself to what is free. You will short-change yourself if you do.

### **Learn to combat the various forms of “no”**

There are so many ways to say no in Japan: *Muzukashi, shikata ga nai; muri, rei ga nai* are all ways to express that something cannot be done. But you CAN set a precedent. Everything I have accomplished so far in Japan, I was told, repeatedly, that it could not be done. I always think of “no” as a challenge to prove otherwise.

People say no for different reasons. Maybe they think that you are suggesting something on a whim and are not serious. Or maybe they are having a bad day. Or maybe you are just not being convincing enough. Developing your negotiating and communication skills is essential to your success wherever you go. Do not despair if people do not see things your way right away.

When you know that you are right, stick to your guns. Too many people give up at the first obstacle. Overcoming the obstacles can be very rewarding.

## **Who's afraid of the taxman?**

*The information in this article applies only to Canadians living in Japan. Other nationalities should investigate whether or not their income tax responsibilities alter subsequent to a change in residency status that may accompany staying in Japan after JET. It is advisable to consult a tax specialist. Then... please contribute your knowledge to Jet and Beyond...*

If you decide to stay in Japan after JET you will have to grapple with the issue of whether or not to maintain residency in Canada. It may be that Canada Customs and Revenue contacts you, requests income-related information and then deems you a non-resident. This is not such a bad thing. Though you may wish to consider the tax advantages that non-residency often affords before the CCRA contacts you, just in case some faceless person in the agency decides to deem you resident and you get caught up in a sea of bureaucratic red tape, not to mention the heavy taxes.

The CCRA determines non-residency through information that you supply on their NR73 'Determination of Residency' questionnaire. The form is voluntary and does not have to be filled out in order for you to become a non-resident. Canadian law states that residency is a "question of fact." It is enough to file a final tax return with the area entitled "date of departure" on page 1 of the return filled in.

It is your responsibility to ensure that the facts of your particular situation support an argument for non-residency, should the CCRA choose to question your status. Even though you may supply proof of residency in Japan to the CCRA, if you have property, medical insurance, or a telephone service in your name, or substantial Canadian investments, or immediate family residing in Canada,

(spouse or child), you will most likely be deemed a Canadian resident. Canada taxes the world income of its residents and therefore, if you are deemed to have residency you will be legally obliged to file taxes. So, rather than end up a legally deemed Canadian resident, if you have substantial “links” to Canada (personal possessions, property, Canadian investments, etc.) you may want to liquidate them all and dispense with your ties to our blessed mother country.

Canadian non-residents have no legal obligation to file taxes, because tax is applied based on factual, or deemed Canadian residency, and source of income. If you remain and work in Japan, especially if you are planning to be in the country long-term, take advantage of your non-resident status, file a final tax return that lists your date of departure and then do not file any further and perhaps costly Canadian tax returns. Canadian law automatically deems non-residents as having disposed of certain assets on the date of their departure from Canada. At fair market value of these assets you will have to report any gains or loss on your final tax return. If you do somehow file Canadian taxes while living in Japan, it is possible to have the CCRA re-evaluate your returns at a later date as non-resident and receive a refund.

Obviously, there are details specific to each individual’s situation that cannot possibly be addressed here. The best thing is to gather all the information about your situation in Canada and Japan, or any other foreign country you choose to reside in, and then approach a tax lawyer or an expatriate tax specialist with your concerns. Just don’t neglect these very important tax issues. That could end up costing you a lot of unnecessary pain and money. For further information, try the CCRA web page or call the international tax services office, collect at 613-952-3741. A NR 73 from the CCRA can be downloaded from

<http://www.ccradrc.gc.ca>  
<http://www.candiansresidentabroad.com>

## **Apartment hunting**

If you are planning to spend more than a year in Japan, renting an apartment is a wise investment, despite the initial cost. For those who are planning on staying only a year and do not want to fork out the dough, ‘gaijin houses’ are an option. Located in most big cities, these accommodations are not cheap (about ¥70,000/month, though

less if you choose to share a room), but they require no deposit or key money. Large companies in Japan often provide subsidised housing for their employees. The digs are usually cramped one room deals, with shared bathing and toilet facilities. While far from glamorous, they are usually the cheapest going.

If you are not concerned about money; want privacy; and desire to keep your home and work life separate, you should get an apartment, which is also a better option if you may potentially change jobs. In regions outside major cities you should expect to pay about ¥30,000 to ¥50,000 for a 2DK house or apartment.

On the other hand, 1DK apartments/mansions within a half-hour of Tokyo run about ¥100,000 per month. Beware of landlords and agents charging exorbitant *shikikin* (deposit fees) and *reikin* (gift money). While you may be asked to pay anything up to the equivalent of six-months rent when you first move in (most of which you will not get back), the standard is about four. Often it is difficult for foreigners to rent houses in certain areas, so you might want to take a Japanese friend along to help you with the lingo and create the right impression. Be sure to dress the part when you visit your agency or landlord for the first time. As you probably know, appearances speak louder than words in Japan.

## **Housing services and relocation assistance**

### **Kimi Information Centre**

Oskar Bldg. 8F, 2-42-3 Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku, Tokyo 171-0014,  
Tel: (03) 3986-1604, Fax: (03) 3986-3037, E-mail: [kimi529@gol.com](mailto:kimi529@gol.com)  
Takes messages and holds mail for a small fee; locates long-term accommodations for three-months rent. Short-term rates vary.

### **Centre for Domestic and Foreign Students**

1-21 Yotsuya, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 161-0004, Tel: (03) 3359-5997,  
Fax: (03) 3359-5957 web: <http://www.naigai.or.jp>

### **Japan Foreigner Housing Processing Centre**

<http://www.fudou3.com/JFHPC/services.html>

### **Century 21 Japan**

<http://www.century21japan.com>

### **Recommended reading**

*Japan Study and Teaching Guide*. Paul Abramson, Tokyo Central, ¥1000. This book lists 500 schools that teach either English or Japanese, and has tips on living and setting up a home in Japan, as well as finding work and getting a visa.

*Housing in Tokyo*. Hiragana Times. ¥500. In English and Japanese to help you deal with finding a place to live in Tokyo, including information on setting up utilities, phones, etc., as well as useful telephone numbers.

*Living For Less in Tokyo and Liking It*. Asuka Kodansha Co., Ltd., ¥2000. Locates bargains *Japan As It Is*. Nihon Tate Yoko, Gakken Co., Ltd., ¥1500. Explanations in English and Japanese.

### **Home-stays**

A final option for those wishing to avoid all of the costs involved in moving is living with a Japanese family. For those keen to immerse themselves in the Japanese life-style a la home-stay: make a point of meeting the family ahead of time.

#### **Japanese home-stays –one JET’s experience**

One of the goals of the JET Programme is to promote grass roots internationalisation through each participant’s involvement in his or her community and school. Though JET participants are immersed in Japanese school and office culture, most do not get the chance to spend a lot of time with Japanese families. Home stays on the other hand can offer the JET a priceless opportunity to share one’s own culture while learning about Japan and its people from an inside perspective.

Home stays can last from only a few days to as long as a year, depending on the purposes of the stay. Longer home stays assist with foreign language conversation study and help the guest gain deeper insight into the host culture. Naturally, it is also more likely to make lifelong friendships through a long-term home stay, since the longer time spent with a host family, the stronger the bonds that can be made.

These days, as foreign travel has become a popular pastime, it can be difficult to find places to go that are not swarming with tourists. However, a short-term home-stay when travelling abroad allows one to go off the typical tourist route while becoming familiar with the host culture and lifestyle through interaction with the people of the country in their homes.

Though home stays are often inexpensive or even free, remember that they are not just cheap accommodation. The family you stay with is most likely hosting a foreigner to share their own culture while getting to know someone from another culture. It is important to reciprocate those feelings by spending plenty of time with your host family and sharing in the events of their daily life. During my home stay experiences in Japan, I enjoyed home-cooked fish for breakfast and I listened to my host father recite Buddhist chants in front of the *butsudan* each evening. I had long talks over green tea after dinner, and taught interesting phrases in English such as, "That hit the spot!" after a steaming bowl of ramen. While living with a host family is undoubtedly fun, it also presents an array of challenges.

As you may know, living with others can be challenging even without the cultural and linguistic barrier. Differences in customs and language often create misunderstandings on both sides. However, good communication can work these wrinkles out, allowing both sides to understand each other better and, consequently, become closer.

During my first time in Japan as a college student, I stayed with a family who had never hosted a foreigner before. As my Japanese language ability was minimal, we had to use dictionaries, bits of English, and gestures to communicate. Although this was frustrating at times, it was also very satisfying when we were able to understand each other. I felt that both the family and I were enjoying the home stay experience very much. However, since I was not yet familiar with Japanese customs, nor did they understand my background, this led to many misunderstandings. I was reprimanded many times for mistakes I did not realise I had made.

Confused and hurt, I drew away and stopped making an effort to communicate. My host parents did the same. The situation remained unchanged until I dreaded going home each day because I felt unwanted in their home. Eventually, I decided to leave the

family because we were not able to work out our differences. Looking back now, if I were able to experience the same situation again, I would have tried my best to communicate and try to understand that family's customs better. I think we both needed to be more flexible and open-minded. More than anything, it is important to keep the communication lines open, especially when troubled or confused. This can help prevent conflicts that may arise from misunderstandings.

In deciding whether or not to experience a home stay while travelling, studying, or working abroad, it's important to think of your goals and whether staying with a local family will help you to achieve them. It is certainly a great way to get to know a culture and its people more deeply. It also may be one of the best ways to internationalise because there is a necessity to understand each other in order to coexist peacefully under the same roof.

If you have never tried a home stay before, I strongly recommend it. Whether it is a Japanese family or one from another culture, it will most certainly be one experience not to be forgotten.

## **Home-stay organisations**

### ***Japanese Association of the Experiment in International Living***

Hirakawacho Fushimi Bldg. 3F1-4-3 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku  
Tokyo 102-0093. Tel (03) 3261-3451  
E-mail: [eiljpapan@mugbiglobe.ne.jp](mailto:eiljpapan@mugbiglobe.ne.jp) <http://www.experiment.org>

Home-stays in 21 communities around Japan all year long except from Dec. 20 to Jan 10. August stay is only 2 weeks maximum. Individuals can stay 1 to 4 weeks. Groups can stay 1 month. ¥33,400 per week per individual.

### ***Shonai Intl Youth Festival Committee***

Intl Forum 8-32 Dewa Shonai Isehara-machi Tsuroka-shi  
Yamagata-ken Tel: (0235) 25-3600

8-day stays for individuals, late July to early August in Tsuroka and 13 local communities. Availability coincides with an outdoor international festival. Cost is ¥10,000.

### ***Kangawa International Association***

1-2-1 Kosugaya Sakae-ku, Yokohama-shi Kanagawa-ken 247-0007  
Tel: (045) 896-2626

2 to 3 day stays available around the ken for individuals all year long. Room and board is free.

### ***Sagamihara International Association***

1-5-5 Misono Sagamihara-shi, Kanagawa-ken 228-0817  
Tel: (0427) 42-4406 Fax: (0427) 43-0509

Individual or group stays are available in the city all year long for any number of days at **¥R 000 to ¥S 000** a day.

### ***Kanazawa International Exchange Foundation***

2-2-43 Naga-machi, Kanazawa-shi, Ishikawa-ken 920-0865  
Tel (076) 220-2522 E-mail: [Kies@hotiia.or.jp](mailto:Kies@hotiia.or.jp)

Individual stays are available all year long for a few days at a time in and around Kanazawa. Recommendation from a Japanese person is required. Book in advance for the summer. Call for more information.

### ***ROCK Planning Committee in Tsuruga***

c/o Higashi Clinic Kiyomizu 2-9-14, Tsuruga-shi,  
Fukui-ken 914 Tel: (0770) 25-6970 Fax: (0770) 25-6971

Individual stays are available for 2 to 3 days, all year long in Tsuruga and around central Fukui ken. They are usually free.

### **Minoh Assoc. for Global Awareness**

Toyokawa Branch, Minoh City Hall 2F 1-2-1 Aomabani-nishi, Osaka  
562 Tel: (0727) 27-6912 Fax: (0727) 27-6920

Group stays are available 1 day to 1 year, all year long in and around northern Osaka. The cost varies.

### **Matsuyama International Centre**

7-5 Minato-machi, Matsuyama-shi. Ehime-ken 790  
Tel (089) 943-2025 Fax: (089) 931-2041

Group or individual stays are available all year long from 1 day to a few months in the city and surrounding area. The cost is minimal.

### **Karamosia (Saidan Hjon Kramosio)**

Karaimo-Asia Village 3811 Kamitakakuma-cho Kanoya-shi,  
Kagoshima-ken 893-0131 Tel: (0994) 45-2718 Fax: (0994) 45-2722

Individual stays are available for 2 weeks in March and in the summer throughout Kagoshima and Miyazaki. The cost is subject to change and varies from ¥ 10,000 to ¥ 28,000. The organisation usually takes foreign students, but home-stays are open to JETs.

## **General information on home-stay opportunities**

### **Information Centre, Assoc. of International Education, Japan**

4-5-29, Komaba, Meguro-ku, Tokyo 153 Tel: (03) 5454-5216  
Fax: (03) 5454-5236 website <http://www.aiej.or.jp>

International associations can supply information on the home-stay opportunities available in their prefectures.

## **When pigs fly: moving with pets**

*Donna M. Kashat is an avid pet lover and not content to furnish her house with rag-rugs and pot-plants. Instead, she regularly treats her cat to an aeroplane ride.*

Japanese animal quarantine laws have become stricter since 2000, but it is possible to transport your pets to and from Japan. Regulations vary depending on the animal. Import and export is permitted for: dogs and cats, small birds, monkeys, rabbits, livestock, frogs, snakes, fish, racoons, foxes and skunks. Count on an inspection at the *ken eki* (Animal Quarantine Section) at the airport. Quarantine can range from 14 to 180 days.

However, small pets from countries considered to be rabies-free, (Australia, Cyprus, Fiji Islands, Great Britain, Guam, Hawaii, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, Sweden, Taiwan)

may only require twelve hours or less. Documentation must come in the form of a health certificate from the relevant authorities (certified vets, immigration officials) in the country of departure. The health certificate must verify that the animal has been raised or present in the region for the past six months. It must contain the dates of the relevant vaccinations; have an official stamp, and state that the animal "Does not have, nor is suspected of having, rabies or leptospirosis (infectious disease)." Beware: a vet's letter is not enough. You MUST provide a special form listing the specific vaccinations. Be sure you have precise information and contact names. For further information, contact your Embassy.

<http://www.animal-quarantine-service.go.jp/english/index2.htm>

## Movers

For small moves *Takyubin* is hassle-free and special rates are available for bulk shipments. Contact Yamato Kabushikigaisha (*Kuro-neko*) 2-16-10 Chuo, Ginza, Tokyo, 104-0061 Tel: (03) 3541-3411.

## Mover's numbers

### Tokyo

ABC Transport  
(03) 3368-5995  
Crown Pacific  
(03) 3435-9533  
Duck!  
(03) 3303-1111  
Econoship  
(03) 3705-5595  
Japan Express Co.  
(I) Domestic  
(03) 3472-6265  
(II) International  
(03) 3474-9251

### Yokohama

System Mover  
(045) 651-3068

### Osaka

Art Hikkoshi  
Centre  
(0720) 74-0123  
Crown Group  
(078) 331-9725  
Yamato Transport  
(06) 681-8010

### Nagoya

Art Hikkoshi  
Center  
(052) 363-0123  
Nippon Express  
(052) 961-2255

### Fukuoka

Art Hikkoshi  
Center  
(092) 611-0123  
Nihon Hikkoshi  
(092) 611-3177  
Yamato Transport  
(092) 411-0431

### Sapporo

Art Hikkoshi  
Center  
(011) 883-0123  
Hikkoshi Service  
(011) 665-337  
Yamato Express  
(011) 893-3411

## Hostels

### Hokkaido

Kushiro-shi,  
Hokkaido  
0154-41-1676

Sounkyo  
Kamikawa-cho,  
Hokkaido  
01658-5-3418

Nakayamatoge  
Kimobetsu-cho,  
Hokkaido  
0136-33-2668

Sapporo Miyagaoka  
Sapporo-shi,  
Hokkaido  
011-611-9016

### Northern Japan

Hachimantai  
Matsuo-mura,  
Iwate  
0195-78-2031

Towada  
Kosaka-machi,  
Akita  
0176-75-2603

Minami-zao  
Shichikashuku  
Miyagi  
0224-37-2124

Taira, Iwaki-shi,  
Fukushima  
0246-34-7581

### Kanto Area

Nikko-shi, Tochigi  
0288-54-1013

Haruna Kogen  
Haruna-machi,  
Gunma  
0273-74-9300

Okuchichibu  
Otaki-mura,  
Saitama  
0494-55-0056

Kamikita  
Moroyama-machi,  
Saitama  
0482-94-0219

Chiba-shi  
043-294-1850

Tateyama-shi,  
Chiba  
0470-28-0073  
Tokyo Kokusai

Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo  
03-3235-1107

Takao Hachioji-shi,  
Tokyo 0426-61-0437

Jogashima  
Miura-shi,  
Kanagawa  
0468-81-3893

Shonan,  
Chigasaki-shi,  
Kanagawa  
0467-82-2401

### Central Honshu

Kashiwazaki-shi,  
Niigata  
0257-22-5740

Fuji Saiko  
Ashiwada-mura,  
Yamanashi  
0555-82-2616

Shirakabako  
Chino-shi, Nagano  
0266-68-2031

Komagane-shi,  
Nagano  
0265-83-3856

Ito-shi, Shizuoka  
0557-45-0224

Toyama-shi,  
Toyama  
0764-37-9010

Hokonoko, Ena-shi,  
Gifu 0573-65-3534

Kamikanoyama,  
Gifu 058-263-6631

Nagoya-shi,  
Aichi 052-781-9845

### Kansai

Otsu-shi, Shiga  
0775-22-8009

Utano  
Kyoto-shi, Kyoto  
075-462-2288

Amano-hashidate Miyazu-shi, Kyoto 0772-27-0121	Fuse-mura, Tachikuekyo Izumo-shi, Shimane 0853-45-0102	Iizuka-shi, Fukuoka 0948-22-6385
Tangohanto Tango-cho, Kyoto 0772-75-1529	Washu-zan Kurashiki-shi, Okayama 086-479-9280	Nagasaki-shi, 0958-23-5032 Aso-machi, Kumamoto 0967-34-0804
Hattori-Ryokuchi Toyonaka-shi, Osaka 06-862-0600	Hiroshima-shi, 082-221-5343	Hita Oyama Oyama-machi, Oita 0973-52-2134
Ashiya-shi, Hyogo 0797-38-0109	Hinoyama Shimonoseki, Yamaguchi 0832-22-3753	Nichinan-kaigan Nichinan-shi, Miyazaki 0987-27-0113
<b>Southern Honshu</b>	<b>Kyushu</b>	Sakurajima Kagoshima 0992-93-21
Okinoshima Shimane 08512-7-4321	Yakiyama Kogen	

The hostels above belong to the Japan Hospitality Youth Hostel Group and are run by the prefecture governments. No memberships are required for an overnight stay as these are public hostels. A bed in a shared room runs from around ¥1500 to ¥3500, without meals. There is often a curfew. Their site hasn't been updated for a while but you can check it at <http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/key-yh>

For information on approximately 450 private hostels in Japan see Japan Youth Hostels, Inc. (International Youth Hostel Fed): <http://www.jyh.or.jp>, or for a list and a map contact:

Japan Youth Hostels, National Office, Suidobashi Nishiguchi Kaikan,  
2- 20-7 Misaki-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo. Tel: 03-3288-1417

## Resources

### **Financial Consultants**

Meyer Asset Management Ltd. <http://www.meyerjapan.com>  
3F Toranomon RICH Bldg. 5-11-13 Toranomon, Minato-ku,  
Tokyo 105-0001 Tel: 03-5777-1071

Stirling MacGuire  
Royal Bldg. 2F, Akasaka, 7-6-15, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-0052  
Tel: 03-5575-37

### **Periodicals**

Town page Tele Directory <http://www.english.itp.ne.jp>  
Tokyo Weekender <http://www.weekender.co.jp>  
Metropolis Magazine <http://www.metropolis.jp.or>  
J@pan Inc <http://www.cjnn.com>  
Kansai Time Out <http://www.kto.co>  
Japan-zine <http://www.japan-zine.com>  
The Weekly Post <http://www.weeklypost.com>  
The Daily Yomiuri <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/daily>  
The Japan Times <http://www.japantimes.co.jp>  
The Hiragana Times <http://www.hiraganatimes.com>  
Japan Today <http://www.japantoday.com>  
Japan Echo <http://www.japanecho.co.jp/index.html>  
The Nikkei <http://www.nni.nikkei.co.jp/AC/FEAT/rec/>  
Asahi News <http://www.asahi.com/english/english.html>  
Japan Media <http://www.kanzaki.com/jpress/presslink.html>

### **Japan Internet Guides:**

Regular JET conference speaker 's collection of Japan based musings  
<http://www.voicenet.co.jpdauld>

Japan Centre for International Communications  
<http://www.jinjapan.org/>

Mix pizza maps, search engine, reference areas  
<http://www.mixpizza.co.jp>

Jim Breen's site, excellent language study links  
<http://www.csse.monash.edu.au/~jwb/japanese.html>

Larry Stockton's site, huge and informative  
<http://www2.lafayette.edu/~stocktoj/home/japanl.html>

Stanford University's J-Guide  
<http://bases.stanford.edu/USATMC/jguide/Essays>

Affairs of a serious nature in Japan.  
<http://www.expat-repat.com/index2.html>

## International Associations

### Hokkaido/ Tohoku

Aomori Foundation for Adv. International Relations	Tel: (0177) 35-2221
Iwate International Association	Tel: (019) 654-8900
Miyagi International Association	Tel: (022) 275-3796
Sendai Int'l Relations Association	Tel: (022) 65-2211
Akita International Association	Tel: (0188) 64-1181
Yamagata Assoc. for Int'l Relations	Tel: (0236) 24-0043

### Kanto

Ibaraki International Association	Tel: (029) 241-1611
Tochigi International Association	Tel: (028) 621-0777
Gunma International Association	Tel: (027) 243-7271
Saitama International Association	Tel: (048) 647-4175
Chiba International Association	Tel: (043) 297-0245
Tokyo International Association	Tel: (03) 5221-9020

### Hokuriku

Niigata International Association	Tel: (025) 285-6020
Nagaoka International Association	Tel: (0258) 39-2207
Takaoka International Association	Tel: (0766) 20-1269
Toyama Cosmopolitan Association	Tel: (0764) 42-1109
Fukui International Association	Tel: (0776) 28-8800

### Chubu

Yamanashi International Association	Tel: (0552) 28-5419
Nagano Int'l Exchange Association	Tel: (026) 235-7186
Gifu International Centre	Tel: (058) 277-1013
Shizuoka Assoc. for Int'l Relations	Tel: (054) 221-335
Aichi International Association	Tel: (052) 961-8744

### Kinki

Mie International Exchange Foundation	Tel: (059) 223-5006
Shiga Int'l Friendship Association	Tel: (0775) 26-0931
Kyoto Prefecture International Centre	Tel: (075) 342-5000
Osaka Foundation of Int'l Exchange	Tel: (06) 6973-7500
Hyogo International Association	Tel: (078) 382-2051
Nara International Foundation	Tel: (0742) 27-2436
Wakayama Int. Exchange Assoc.	Tel: (0734) 31-4344

**Chugoku**

Tottori Int'l Exchange Foundation	Tel: (0857) 31-5951
Shimane International Centre	Tel: (0852) 31-5056
Okayama Int'l Exchange Foundation	Tel: (086) 256-2000
Hiroshima International Centre	Tel: (082) 541-3777
Yamaguchi Int'l Exchange Assoc.	Tel: (0839) 25-7353

**Shikoku**

Tokushima Int'l Exchange Assoc.	Tel: (0886) 56-3303
Kagawa Int'l Exchange Association	Tel: (087) 837-5908
Ehime International Association	Tel: (089) 943-6688
Kochi International Association	Tel: (0888) 75-0022

**Kyushu/Okinawa**

Fukuoka International Association	Tel: (092) 733-5630
Saga International Relations Association	Tel: (0952) 25-7921
Nagasaki International Association	Tel: (095) 823-3931
Kumamoto International Exchange Network Association	Tel: (096) 383-1502
Oita International Exchange Centre	Tel: (0975) 38-5161
Miyazaki International Foundation	Tel: (0985) 32-8457
Okinawa International Foundation	Tel: (098) 836-9900

# Finding Work

Preferred careers – The JET Top 10

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1. Education
2. Law/Legal services
3. International Relations
4. Business Administration
5. TESL/TEOFL
6. Computer/Information Services
7. Art
8. Marketing
9. Writing
10. Communications

# Job-Hunting Tips

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## Find yourself

The tools for personal exploration are as varied as the people who use them. I have dabbled in the Black Arts and Tarot Card readings, and I have also spent several years trying to speak with an assortment of gods. Life was good, but none of these paths led me to a job that I loved—probably because there is not much of a market for Tarot card readers or mystics, and the work involves too much wandering around for my tastes, anyway. Choosing a different future was largely a matter of having other, more highly prioritised values. The point I wish to make is that for all of us, some kind of structured self-assessment is necessary before any realistic career plan can be drawn up. Do whatever turns you on, but this self-assessment can, if you choose to use it, come in the form of a career-aptitude test.

If you enter the vast labyrinth of textual and web-based resources that assist with career planning, you will encounter many such tools for self-evaluation. It would be a simple task indeed, if all the assistance offered guaranteed the utopia at which it hints. However, even though dreams really do come true, they often need a little magic to get them off the floor. Make it a plan to seek out good advice, as you follow up on some of those internal visions for ‘a good life’ that you hold. But where to start and who to trust? Richard Bolles, author of *What Colour is Your Parachute*, supplies links to several on-line career aptitude tests, along with some sound advice for those interested in using them. Although a professional career counsellor should really administer these tests, online versions can be found with plenty of other useful information at the Internet supplement to his book, *The Job-hunter's Bible*, at <http://www.jobhuntersbible.com>.

*Quintessential Careers* (<http://www.quintcareers.com/index.html>) has thoughtfully sorted a mind-boggling amount of career assistance guides into categories that range from general, to industry or location specific, and include such things as salary negotiation, resumes, women's issues, or graduate careers. Their bookstore (conveniently affiliated with Amazon.com) ranks the

books as “best bets” and “the rest,” with reviews of many available. In the absence of stellar help from a personal career counsellor, good career books are well worth your investment. Take the time to purchase a few that will be useful for you.

## **Network**

With the advent of the new global economy and a highly fluid labour pool, networking has moved from the realm of essential life skills into an art form - the art of marketing yourself, so if you are not already talking about your future with all the people you know, start now. Be aware that your occupational horizon is profoundly linked to the social groups with whom you choose to associate, and to your social habits. Make it a point to travel in what you consider to be enlightened and friendly circles. More than sixty percent of all people seeking employment find their jobs through informal relationships, and the situation is unlikely to change. Employers like to hire people they know.

Even if you are not at the point where you know what you want to do for a long-term occupation, pursue your interests and hobbies through clubs and associations, and do volunteer work or other activities that are meaningful for you. Make a conscientious effort to reach out to people with whom you have things in common. Re-establish your contact with some long-lost friends. Use your Alumni Association. Get on-line with AJET. Search out professional associations and interest groups in the areas that are attractive to you. Within these such places do not be embarrassed to let everyone you know that you are on the war path, focussed on enacting your values in your lifestyle and heading for meaningful work. Specifically ask your friends and acquaintances if they know people in certain industries with whom you can talk. Keep your eyes and ears open, ask questions and are a good listener when you get answers. If you do not have the knack for networking just yet, it will come with time. Just make sure to branch out and develop your ability to represent yourself.

Although they do not lead to jobs as often as their sponsors would have you believe, do not exclude attending trade shows, conferences or industry and job fairs. They can be a goldmine of

information on the companies, occupations and contacts to search out in your selected career fields. Start building relationships with professionals in your chosen career. Most people, even strangers, are happy to at least talk about how they got their start in their current occupation, so be conscientious about making contacts, and conversation—cannot stress it enough. Feel free to ask plenty of questions. After all, everyone you speak with should already know that you are in the process of hunting down a good job in your chosen field.

If you have the professional stature to support it, design a business card that lists your favourite achievements and special talents on the back. Or, for a different and dynamic approach on how to spread yourself around, consider using a technique similar to the marketing letters available at *Career Lab*, <http://www.careerlab.com/letters>. However you decide to go about it, just remember to let everyone know that you are working on your career and looking for a suitable job. Exchange contact information and affirm the future.

#### **Suggested reading**

*The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen R. Covey, Simon and Schuster, NY, 1997.

*When Corporations Rule the World*, David C. Korten, Kumarian Press Ltd, 1996.

*Who's Hiring Who? How to Find That Job Fast*. Richard Lathrop. Ten Speed Press, 1989.

*Zen and the Art of Making a Living*. Laurence Bolt.

### **The Etiquette of Informational Interviews**

Informational interviewing is an important element in the “creative job search” made famous by Richard Bolles. Be aware that this technique should ONLY be used to obtain information on the careers and/or companies where you might be interested in working. Setting up an informational interview in order to work it into a job offer is not a good idea.

If you request an interview with the purpose of getting information,

be honest and have the integrity to stick to your word. Many professionals will give 15 or 20 minutes of their time to someone who appears genuine and polite; you can make a cold call to request an interview and expect positive results. However, informational interviewing is, on occasion, abused, and the more often this happens, the less likely people will be willing to talk to strangers seeking information. That being said, if in pursuit of a career you decide to use informational interviewing to make contacts (make them many) and get information (make it plenty), you will inevitably be leaving an impression on your contacts. That impression can be positive and potentially beneficial to your job hunt, or ... umm ... well...

So, although informational interviews are to be regarded as non-threatening, informal information gathering sessions (and excellent practice for a job interview), good manners and form need to be observed. Leave your contacts with a positive memory of you that will be vivid enough to bring you to mind if they learn about some work available that seems perfect for you.

#### **Informational interviewing dos and don'ts**

1. Research the field, occupation, company and the interviewee (If possible) before setting up any interviews.
2. To request an interview, walk in, phone, write a letter or email, or get a referral (mention the contact's name when asking for an interview). Emphasise that you are seeking information, and briefly explain why.
  - [http://www.quintcareers.com/information\\_sample\\_letter.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/information_sample_letter.html)
  - Prepare thoughtful interview questions designed to discover if the occupation at hand really suits your values (lots of sample questions on the net)
3. Bring a résumé but do not pull it out unless prompted to do so, and do not leave it unless asked to do so.
4. Dress as would a professional in the industry.
5. Be an active listener and ask the questions that come to mind as a result of your conversation. If you wish to take notes, ask first.
6. Ask if the interviewee knows of anyone else (2 people) whom he or she thinks would be useful for you to speak with.
7. Do not display any signs of desperation, arrogance or self-deprecation.

8. ALWAYS follow up with a short thank you note that is sent in time to arrive no later than a week after the interview!
9. If you have developed a good rapport with your interviewees, it is appropriate to re-contact them for further information.
10. Try to interview at the interviewee's place of work, if not ... you might be buying coffee or lunch.
11. Evaluate the information you received, and update your resume, occupational outlook, skills, education, etc. accordingly.
12. Keep a detailed and current record of your contacts and their contact information. Keep them informed of your progress.

### **In the realm of gods and monsters: the Internet and your job search**

Of course an Internet job search does not mean ferreting out the biggest job databanks and hammering out a résumé onto each and every one. Most of us are familiar with the stats: In 1998, only 4% of Internet job postings earned their owners a job. However, the question is not whether to use the Internet, the question is how to use its power as a research and networking tool to drag up an Excalibur and wage battle against whatever problem has been brought to the holy waters in a search for answers.

In case you think I have just spun a conceit to twinkle your toes and whisk you off to a life more entertaining, I kid you not. "It's a pretty unpredictable, unsophisticated tool," says one Internet guru. But it is a tool that you will use to manage an effective career search.

If Net-surfing translates for you into something like plodding through thousands of unconnected and largely uninformative web pages, before you attempt to drag a sword out of a stone—standing at least knee deep in water—the next time you turn on your computer, head for the *Riley Guide*, <http://www.rileyguide.com>. Margaret Dikel's famous web page is note worthily entitled, *Employment Opportunities and Job Resources on the Internet*, a large portion of it is dedicated to assisting people with an Internet job search. There you can spend hours learning ways to navigate the deep, as well as browse for occupational guides, online newspapers and magazines, industry trend information, or

information about international jobs and job boards.

Once you have found ways to increase the chance of getting at what you are looking for, you are ready to work over the Internet and find the right job for you. What are going to be the most useful things to conjure from the depths that will magically cleave a path for you to your dream job? Hmmm. Well, that depends on where you are in your career search. If you are just trying to get a sense of the areas where you think you might want to work, start with a broad search for information on industry trends and growth opportunities in your home country or tempting locale. National human resources department generally have occupational guides on the net. Research career fields that appeal to you, the job titles and skills associated with them.

After using the occupational guides, gather as much information as you can from the online professional magazines, and from the web pages for professional associations in the career areas where you wish to work.

You may wish to subscribe to email lists and online newsletters. These are of particular use to JETs stuck miles away from home, or other tempting locales where we want to work. Connecting with a list set up as a professional resource, for example a list for English teachers in China, is an excellent way to meet new friends and get plenty of up-to-date information about the milieu and employment conditions in a specific geographic location, or specific occupation. (However, if you do not observe the list's rules, you may not like some of the responses you get!) For the list obsessive, take a look at *Ozemia's Links: Listservs and Mailing Lists*. <http://www.ozemia.com/links20.htm>

Anyone interested in finding contacts in a particular institution should access the institution's web site. In addition to an employment section where companies advertise positions that become available, the names of company personnel and their positions are usually listed on the web site. It is easy to discover

who is doing the job you want to do.

You will need the information on the website to assist you in your interview preparation anyway, so ALWAYS check out the net before you head into a room to talk with someone about their company or their job. 15 minutes at a web page will yield plenty of information. If you are targeting a specific company with a résumé and you want to land it on the right desk, try to find out who makes the hiring decision regarding your application. Although human resources may be unhappy when you bypass them, if they do not actually do the hiring, it is better to make contact with the person who does and get your resume directly onto his or her desk. This information often can be gleaned from a little bit of Internet research and a quick conversation with someone in the company.

Vast amounts of jobs are being advertised via job boards on the net these days. While it is true that these ads are widely read and the prospects of getting a job through them are slim, (roughly 5%), scanning the job boards can give you an overview of the labour market, and, most importantly—employer keywords to use in your résumé. Using the appropriate terminology in your résumé often makes a difference in getting an interview.

If you choose to put a general résumé online, do not spend much time at it, and be aware that the best résumé format for an Internet search is not the same as the one you use for a resume in a normal job search. Internet résumés are often screened via a computer program that scans for key words. Also, try to use the Internet résumé services that offer you a personal connection, such as direct access to a personnel agency that you are already dealing with, or the résumé services of any professional association you might belong to, like JETAA or your Chamber of Commerce.

The ability to find and use information is fundamental to human existence. We all do it. The Internet must be an entertaining diversion for many of us, its use is apparently replacing the hours we spend watching TV. As a tool it has made access to

information much easier. If you learn to use the Internet effectively, the information you produce from it will also become more reliable and precise. Not only will your new found abilities enhance your job search, they will also add value to your job. Either way you look at it, a dive into the deep end can only end in a win-win.

## **General Internet Resources**

### **Job boards**

Some words of warning from an ex-JET: “Be prepared for a flood of badly prepared queries from fly by night agencies that scour the Internet for this info. They will waste your time and get you almost nothing.”

Monster Board	<a href="http://www.monster.com">http://www.monster.com</a>
The Job Track:	<a href="http://www.jobtrak.com">http://www.jobtrak.com</a>
Hot Jobs (tech jobs)	<a href="http://www.hotjobs.com">http://www.hotjobs.com</a>
TEFL Jobs	<a href="http://www.tefl.com">http://www.tefl.com</a>
Global Careers	<a href="http://www.globalcareers.com">http://www.globalcareers.com</a>
The Head Hunter	<a href="http://www.headhunter.co.jp">http://www.headhunter.co.jp</a>
Career Mosaic	<a href="http://www.careermosaic.com">http://www.careermosaic.com</a>
International Job Source	<a href="http://www.jobsourcenet.com">http://www.jobsourcenet.com</a>
Resume Link	<a href="http://www.brassring.com">http://www.brassring.com</a>
Diversity Directory	<a href="http://www.mindexchange.com/europe.htm">http://www.mindexchange.com/europe.htm</a>
TMP World-wide	<a href="http://www.tmp.com/TMP800/index.html">http://www.tmp.com/TMP800/index.html</a>
The Linguist	<a href="http://www.linguist.org/jobsindex.html">http://www.linguist.org/jobsindex.html</a>
Select Appointments	<a href="http://www.selectgroup.com/selectgroup/select/index5.htm">http://www.selectgroup.com/selectgroup/select/index5.htm</a>

### **Information**

Search Beat	<a href="http://www.searchbeat.com">http://www.searchbeat.com</a>
Electronic News Stand	<a href="http://www.eneews.com">http://www.eneews.com</a>
Magazine Rack	<a href="http://www.magazine-rack.com">http://www.magazine-rack.com</a>
Free Press	<a href="http://www.freep.com">http://www.freep.com</a>
Scholarly Societies	<a href="http://scholarly-societies.org">http://scholarly-societies.org</a>
The Internet: A Powerful Job Search Tool (Legal Job Searches)	<a href="http://www.nsulaw.nova.edu/career/internet_jobs_search.htm">http://www.nsulaw.nova.edu/career/internet_jobs_search.htm</a>

### **Career search assistance**

About.com	<a href="http://www.about.com/careers">http://www.about.com/careers</a>
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Career action	<a href="http://www.careeraction.org">http://www.careeraction.org</a>
Job web	<a href="http://www.jobweb.com">http://www.jobweb.com</a>
Ask the Headhunter	<a href="http://www.asktheheadhunter.com">http://www.asktheheadhunter.com</a>
Career Builder	<a href="http://www.careerbuilder.com">http://www.careerbuilder.com</a>
Wall Street Journal	<a href="http://www.careerjournal.com">http://www.careerjournal.com</a>
Career City (women's info)	<a href="http://www.careercity.com/content/women">http://www.careercity.com/content/women</a>

## **Résumé basics**

In a word, a résumé is a well written and visually appealing document that uses effective short descriptions and high value-added action verbs that emphasise results, in language used by the industry and profession that it addresses. Résumés land interviews not jobs.

So, your résumé is targeted to a particular position, preferably within a particular organisation. Unless you manage to get your résumé directly onto the desk of the very person who makes the final hiring decision, the organisation's human resource personnel will screen it first. The recruiter will spend less than a minute deciding on whether to include you in the "to be interviewed" pile. He or she may have to go through a very large pile of similar applications all arguing effectively to be included for an interview. Your résumé must stand out and inspire confidence. Needless to say the résumé MUST be 100% free of spelling and grammar errors.

Your role as the résumé's writer is to interpret the talents, skills and personal qualities displayed in your accomplishments in a way that will make them relevant to the job targeted by the résumé. You must demonstrate what you did, and you must show that what you can do will be of benefit to your potential employer.

Use your résumé to convey personal qualities that parallel the culture of your targeted organisation. In your résumé you must communicate not only the skills and ability essential for the job that you want but also the right attitude. Once you get the job, the résumé will go into your file and probably be referred to again. Clearly then your résumé also provides an agenda for the interview. A résumé develops from a personal inventory. (Some people call this a career journal.) Your personal inventory should list every

thing you have accomplished, from highly structured employment-related activities, to highly unstructured personal events that may seem trivial when you think about their relationship to finding a job. If you don't keep a personal inventory, start now. It is good for your mind and assists with your self-esteem to sit down and reflect upon what you have achieved. Write everything down. Use it as a guide to the areas where you need some improvement. From your personal inventory select what you have done that is relevant to the job you are applying for. When you hone your inventory into a résumé, the person that you are presenting on paper should be confident and convincing.

Human resources must clearly see that you are qualified to do the job. Avoid including anything that may elicit a, "No." Here are some talents or personal characteristics that you may want to consider from the JET Programme as relevant to the needs of your résumé:

1. Did you get up and go? (Initiative, drive, commitment to goals)
2. Did you organise events? (Strategic thinking, communication, attention to detail, leadership)
3. Did you adapt to your situation in Japan (flexibility, receptivity, performance under pressure)
4. Did you take on any projects (self-motivated, computer literate, leader, administrative skills, creative, resourceful/innovative etc.)?
5. Did you teach? (Presentation, public speaking, evaluation, synthesis and transfer of information, interpersonal skills, punctuality, responsibility, planning)
6. Did you work as a team? (Receptive to different perspectives, goal/achievements oriented, tenacious, loyal, etc.)
7. Did you speak or perform in public or talk to the media? (Public speaking, discretion, handle pressure to perform or do well, representation/advocacy)
8. Did you produce change? (Personal growth, persuasion, implementation, social development)

Contemplate these abilities and their action verbs: analytic (gather, consult, research, evaluate), creative, (conceive, design, originate, invent) interpersonal (mediate, collaborate, mentor, resolve,

support) sales (market, solicit, negotiate, resolve).

Must haves on your résumé include your name, address, telephone number and email address, mission statement (state your objectives: i.e. the job you are after) profile/skills summary, education, dates, and work experience. Professional memberships, licenses and coursework are all optional, as are your interests—which should only be included after serious reflection on what they say about you.

The right personal interest listing can get you selected for an interview over the top of more qualified candidates, make your interview a breeze and lead to an increased salary offer. This is known as a hook: something interesting and relevant that helps you to stand out individually. All résumés need a hook. But, it need not be in the personal interest section. If you don't have a hook to put there don't throw down a weak or irrelevant interest.

Something to consider including under 'Education' is information on who funded your studies. If you worked your way through university or college, let human resources know. It is also important to consider how your coursework has trained you in ways relevant to the job you are applying for. If you have strong practical coursework in your educational background consider including a brief powerful description of what you did in some 'sample projects'.

Depending on the position you are applying for, the résumé should be one to two pages maximum. (If word economy is an important part of the job you are applying for, i.e. journalism or editing, the résumé must be no longer than one page. If you are after a senior position, if you are published, or if you have worked on professional projects, maybe a two-page résumé is appropriate.)

The résumé should not contain a lot of white space. It should have a legible, 10-12 point sans serif (without tail) font for the body text, and a balanced layout that leads the reader's eye. Your name can be printed in 16-18 point font, and categories can come in 12-14 point. Lead with the most powerful things about you. (The best stuff starts, in principle, from the top left-hand corner.) If your work experience

is going to get you the job, list it before your education. If your academic achievements are going to get you the job, lead with your education.

Use good quality paper. If you are applying for a creative position, the résumé should reflect that. Otherwise, no fancy fonts coloured paper or ingenious presentation ideas. Do not include irrelevant experience, a weak group of personal interests, “left for personal reasons,” or future study plans.

There are two different opinions on references: One says, “Write “references available upon request” at the base of the résumé,” the other says, “Don’t bother making mention of references at all; it is assumed that they will be available upon request.” You decide which method inspires confidence. Do your research. It will show up in your résumé. Know the industry, position, organisation and the people. Know the occupational language. In each field most occupations assume a standard level of education and skills. The language you use in your résumé acts to brand your knowledge of the field. Make sure the language you use assists in setting you off from others based upon your uniqueness as well as your familiarity with the field.

### **The Covering Letter**

Always send a cover letter in proper business format (that means the envelope too) that matches, but does not reiterate your résumé. A good résumé will highlight your skills; they need not be repeated in the letter.

The ideal cover letter is about half a page long. Most recruiters won’t read much more than that. Adhering to a single, bland “one-size-fits-all” letter is a mistake. Different circumstances require different letters. Clearly state the position you are seeking in the opening paragraph, or first line, and why you are the best candidate. Only choose one or things to highlight about yourself that indicate you are an above average candidate and the perfect match for the position.

Include a paragraph that describes your interest in the company

and details how you will add value to the organisation. Subtly emphasise your knowledge of the firm and your familiarity with the industry. It is common courtesy to act extremely eager to work for any company you apply for.

In your closing paragraph ask for an interview. It is very important to show that you are committed to action, so tell human resources what you are going to do next—indicate that you will call within a specific time to set an interview up. Include an enclosure line at the bottom of your letter, and don't forget to sign it before you send it off with your résumé.

### **Proof-read**

Have someone who knows something about good writing and layout proofread your résumé and cover letter. Even the most qualified candidate's résumé will be thrown out if such things as typos, poor grammar and sloppy word usage bother the reader.

## **The Interview**

The interview gets you the job offer. You must be prepared to sell yourself. Know your résumé inside and out and go to the interview with a set of things about yourself that you want to make sure come to light during the interview. If you have creative work, bring a portfolio. Make sure you know the name and title of the person who will be interviewing you. If necessary phone and ask.

If you can, find out what kind of interview you will be heading into and what the interviewer may be like. There are many different types of interviews, from highly structured behavioural interviews or panel interviews, to unstructured and seemingly informal conversational ones.

You should be able to handle the dynamics involved in a variety of interview processes. Stay positive about the past, but be prepared to account for the black spots - admitting that you have a legitimate weakness only shows your maturity. Return with comments that indicate what you are doing about improving (i.e. weak in

computers, but taking Power Point). NEVER speak badly of previous employers, no matter how tempted.

Familiarise yourself with common interview questions and have answers prepared for them. Practice, practice, and practice with mock interviews. Arrive about ten to fifteen minutes early, looking sharp and smelling clean. (Some people take along emergency kits: extra tie, lint brush, etc.) Do your share of the work. Repeat the names of those people to who you are introduced.

Relax and tune into the interview with interest. Be a good listener. Silence is good. Use it, especially if you get asked a question that requires you to think (i.e. don't blurt out, "I don't know" or come up with a dummy answer by trying to be quick). Be honest and take some time to consider your answer.

Interview your interviewer. Ask questions. Go in wanting the job, but find out if you really do. Do not ask about compensation or benefits in the first interview. Avoid any other questions that you know are taboo, and beware not to get too personal, even if the interviewer has a disarmingly personal style.

If the interviewer inquires about money, ask first whether the salary for the position is fixed or negotiable. If it is negotiable, you should have already done research to determine a ballpark figure. Do not bid low. If the employers want you, but have money concerns, they will talk about it. If you bid low your employer will surely settle for it.

Finally, do not mirror the interviewer, be yourself. It would be terrible if someone else got the job you were after. If you are interested in taking the position, say so at the end of the interview. Inquire about the next step in the selection process. After the interview; take some time to discuss how it went with a friend or mentor. Always send a follow up thank you letter, email or phone call within the next few days and say once again that you are interested.

## **Seifu Kikan: finding work in Japanese public offices back home**

*Don Christie, an ALT from Fukuoka, is now working at the Japanese Consulate in Toronto*

While many businesses back home may not always have a first-hand familiarity with the JET Programme, Japanese public offices and trade or cultural associations do. This means, that for returning JETs terrific employment opportunities exist at home through organisations associated with the Japanese community.

Former JET participant's ability to work from a Japanese perspective on things presents an advantage to JETs who are searching for work in Japanese public offices at home. It is also very easy for JETs to connect with Japan's embassies and consulates through welcome back receptions hosted in late fall or early winter by the local Consul General or Ambassador from Japan. Guests include representatives from local branch offices of Japanese government sections, as well as from trade, culture, and social institutions. Whether or not you get a chance to meet someone who is hiring at an event like this is one thing, but you are bound to establish a reputation and make vital contacts.

In large cities the JET Alumni Association (JETAA) is a great resource. JETAA members often maintain close ties with Japanese consulates and embassies, because the Japanese government relies upon alumni for support with certain events. Japan in turn supports the efforts of JETAA both financially and through programs. Whether you become active or not, get on your local JETAA mailing list and check the web site regularly. Likewise, Japan related groups even if they are merely social or special interest are often invaluable sources of information.

It is not uncommon to find former JET participants working at the Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO), the Japan Foundation, and local consulate or embassy of Japan. Most jobs that appeal to former JETs are entry-level positions, such as executive assistant,

information or programme officer, and translator/interpreter. How each former JET landed her or his job in this sort of office will vary, but generally speaking, paying a visit to the office in which you would be interested in working is a good idea. Pop in to find out what resources and networks are available, and let them know that you are just back from Japan and looking for work. Try to connect with someone, perhaps a former JET, who works there.

I have been involved with hiring a few people at the consulate in Toronto. It helps when former JETs send a note or stop by to introduce themselves, because in doing so, they help provide a contact base of interested candidates to inform when opportunities arise. As well, the Japanese community tends to be pretty tight. If a job is posted at one office, word travels quickly through the local grapevine. Ideally, it connects to a JETAA communications coordinator or Webmaster and on to former JET participants looking for work, but it never hurts to check in from time to time with contacts you make. Job postings may be specific about certain skills or qualifications, but a JET's familiarity with Japanese social and business etiquette is a very important asset, as are language skills.

Well rounded people with good public relations, writing, editing, computer and organisational skills will appeal to the sort of workplace where one may be asked to take on varying sorts of tasks and duties. Remember that line in your JET contract duties "Anything else as required by the supervisor"? It will probably be part of a job with any Japanese office to which you apply.

It is good to have a game plan and a set of goals in mind that fit with the opportunities available in Japanese public offices. Make every effort to know what the different organisations or offices of the Japanese community in your home city/country do. Knowing what the position you are applying for is about will help you to explain how it fits in with what you've done and intend to do in the future. Read up on the relevant web sites so that you never blindly walk into an interview situation just because the job is

Japan related. Make sure you will enjoy working in any position you apply for.

From my experience in Toronto, it helped to have been in touch with the consulate and JETAA before I left Japan. The job of JET Programme Coordinator was posted just as I was finishing my third year on JET, as were other positions in the Japanese community at the consulate, the Japan Society and Japan Foundation in Toronto. I have found since returning that many of these positions are entry level. They come up on a regular basis as people move on and up. Temporary work related to JET Programme recruitment and pre- departure orientation comes along too. These jobs might only last a month or a few months, but they are a great chance to get your foot in the door and meet people in the local Japanese community. Below is a very, very short list of general links to Japanese government bodies, *seifu kikan*, with international offices.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

<http://www.mofa.go.jp>

Japan Foundation

<http://www.jpf.go.jp>

Japan External Trade Organisation

<http://www.jetro.go.jp>

## Job search Japan Inc.

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*Staying in Japan is not for everyone. If your years as a JET have not driven you completely batty, chances are trying to change jobs will as well. From the hopeless bureaucracy of the Japanese Department of Immigration, to the shocking amounts of key money required for an apartment that makes your JET home look like a genuine mansion, be prepared to test your patience far beyond its usual boundaries.*

### What's out there?

*James McRorie spent three years dodging takoyaki on the JET Programme in Osaka, and now splits all his infinitives at a large bank in Tokyo. The following emails written in times of stress include clipits of advice and show what working post-JET as a translator for a Japanese bank can do to a perfectly intelligent mind.*

**Date: Sun, 08 April 1998 22:01:39**

**Subject: [Each case is different]**

You asked me in your last e-mail what it was like finding a job after my stint in JET. Well, the truth of it is, it is not all that different from finding a job anywhere else. Denver, Dublin, Dover, uh, Dejima, there are constants that apply any where, even in this land of oddly named coffee additives and singing potato vendors. Start early, know what you want, and know what you have to offer, show enthusiasm, dress like a professional and be flexible.

I think that that last part is where my time on JET paid off the most. To be brutally blunt, the “internationalisation” part of JET was important, and I value the experience and friends I made immensely, but the idea itself sounds suspiciously close to a Hallmark moment to the ears of a prospective employer. Sure, exposing young minds to different cultures and values is laudable, but what did you actually do? A plethora of ex-JETs are bouncing around the streets of Otemachi, and almost to a person they echoed me on this. When I asked what played best during their job searches, the answers that came up, in no particular order, were luck, flexibility, skills they had before they came to Japan, the help of colleagues and friends and skills they gained during their time

on JET. Not exactly ground breaking news, but be real, (insert your favourite cliché about perseverance, preparation, hard work and success here, please).

Here at the bank, the HR director, who looks nothing like Catbert by the way, mentions timing as being in his top three considerations when hiring someone. As for the hiring process itself, it was only after two tests and a face to face with the stunt double for those statues on Easter Island that I finally got to meet my boss.

Then they dropped a contract in front of my face, not all that different from most other companies in this respect. The most interesting thing about the interview with the boss was that he never really mentioned anything about the job. Rather, he went on about the weather, and after finding out that I had an interest in writing music, about his days in Vienna. I think this was the “axe murderer” interview. They had already decided to hire me; the boss just needed face time to be sure that I was not some deranged lunatic before I was allowed into the room.

**Date: Mon, 02 June 1998 22:01:39**

**Subject: [Turgid days when the laundry never dries]**

Shall I tell you a story of life in office world? The room is in a flurry right now. The aliens have been pretty busy over the last two days. The locals have been busy trying to look busy, although seven hours of the screen saver is a pretty obvious give away. The boss and the guy in charge decided this morning they need to buy a book of foreign company names. They just finished the preliminary discussion on whether or not they need a book like that. It is now agreed that a book like that could be useful and that everybody would use it; and if they had one, they would keep it in the cabinet (after using it of course.)

They are now deciding which of the lucky staffers will get to go downstairs (and outside) to buy the book. They will probably have to go to Kinokuniya Bookstore to buy the book. Will a jacket be necessary? It is pretty hot out there, but it is not that far.

The strangest thing is that there seem to be designated nodders. These people have no other apparent purpose than to stand there and nod in agreement—an occasional uh-huh—but mostly just nodding. So strong is the group ethic (herd mentality?) that anytime there is any hint of action, even those who have no direct bearing on the issue feel the need to be near. Sometimes a visitor will come into the room and the designated nodders will stop whatever it is they are not doing and go stand around the conversation. Sure, it is odd, but then again, should a predator find its way into the room, the more vital members in the centre will be protected as the nodders are picked off one by one.

**Date: Sun, 21 Aug 1998 23:14**

**Subject: [Fwd: And what is it exactly again that you do?]**

As the designated geek in the office, I get a lot of time to troll the net. There is a lot of good stuff out there and it certainly cuts down on Monday morning frustration when there is no Japan Times due to a press holiday. Asia Net has been particularly bountiful of late. Oh yeah, brush up on Word and Excel, the evil HR director says they are the absolute minimum for hooking into a good job outside of teaching English. Oops, rajio taiso just started and I am out of here. Nothing kills the mood like staccato joint popping deep knee bends in a room where the major topic of the day is more often than not, just how chewy the ramen was at the cafeteria.

**Date: Tue, 27 Nov 1998 15:46:39**

**Subject: [Fwd: Tighter Times]**

Things have got a bit real around here lately. Three aliens have left in the past three weeks and there seem to be no plans to hire any replacements. Instead, returnees from recently disappeared overseas branches have been filling the now vacant posts. Or maybe sitting in the vacant chairs would be a better description. Most of these guys, and I have yet to see otherwise, have worked for the Bank since leaving school. The company takes the lifetime employment thing very seriously, providing a chair at the window at the very least, but the returnee in our section spends most of his time on the phone trying to find another position. The network is

extensive, but so far nothing. The boss knows this guy is out of here as soon as he can be, so the workload is pretty close to non-existent. From talking to some of the other ageing X-ers in nearby sections, this is not that unusual of a situation.

I read that there are now less than 50 jobs for every one hundred job seekers, the first time since this has happened since they started keeping such numbers a few years after the end of the Second World War. The word is that the Bank will be cutting back substantially on the hiring next April. The HR directors say my job is safe as long as I do not punch the boss, what an odd thing to say? Your turn.

**Date: Sat, 11 Feb 1999 15:01:39**

**Subject: [It is a fish I tell you]**

Remember when you were in grade school and you had certain rules regarding who sat and ate where and in what order during lunch that absolutely could not be broken? Well, some things never change. Let me introduce you to the company cafeteria.

Done up in 1960's discount chic, or maybe toilet tile green, our shokudo is regularly mentioned by employees as being one of the best things about the company. We have two kitchens, featuring a deluxe menu of six rice-based dishes and six noodle-based treats. It is run as a separate business, but in the heavily-subsidised-by-dad kind of way. C'mon, two hundred yen for spaghetti, a dinner roll, tea and yoghurt. Competition need not rear its wa-disturbing head!

Anyway, there is an unwritten set of rules and rituals regarding lunchtime behaviour in the esteemed shokudo. First, co-ed dining is a major taboo. The line that no Y-chromosome may pass starts somewhere over there, and any attempt to slurp oily noodles in the restricted zone will start the rumour mill a-turning. As I am sure you have guessed, whole sections eat together, but even at those tables, the segregation is clear. When a section goes to the cafeteria

together, one of the lower food chain members will often be sent up in advance to secure a table. These kids are easy to spot. They are the ones nervously vacillating between defending the empty table from intruders with a withering attack of apologies and straining to see when the other section members are going to show up. Each table also has a thermos of hot tea. The newbie has to defend this too. Occasionally, an old silverback will try to sit down at the empty table, pretending not to see the incessantly bowing defender, but this is a rare thing. Mostly, the section shows up as scheduled, eats at precisely the same speed and using that magic telepathy we can never seem to get a handle on, finishes at exactly the same time, flinging their chairs back in the collective standing up. Then they head off to the line for turning in trays and dishes, showing a grace and flow in merging with those already in line that would make the on ramp of a 4:30 Friday afternoon freeway in Los Angeles look like a Swiss watch. Trays become battering devices, curry encrusted spoons are waved in front of the tray to gross others out of their position in line. To look where you are going is to admit defeat.

After depositing the trays, the destination of choice is often the coffee lounge down the hall. It is a uniquely Japanese disaster of red velvet curtains and garage sale furniture with the no smoking rule completely banished. There is a non-smoking section, but it is three tables in the middle of the room. After waiting in vain for the Wayne Newton show to begin, most employees head back to their desks, having just spent their lunch break completely enveloped by the workplace. Our cafeteria: the Japanese workplace in microcosm. Food, fun and a floorshow, it never fails to amaze.

## **Translation Resources**

William Lise's site

<http://www.lise.jp>

Honyaku

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/honyaku>

Japan Association of Translators (Mailing list ¥5,000)

<http://www.jat.org>

American Translators Association

<http://atanet.org>

Institute of Translation and Interpreting (UK, Japan Network)

<http://welcom.to/jnet>

Australian Institution of Interpreters and Translators

<http://www.ausit.org>

Canadian Translators and Interpreters Council

<http://www.synapse.net/~ctic>

Annual International Japanese English Translation Conference

<http://www.ijet.org/ijet-13>

Simul Academy ("J -to -E translation for native speakers of English")

[http://www.simul.co.jp/academy/aca\\_nse.html](http://www.simul.co.jp/academy/aca_nse.html)

\*Currently the only course of its kind in Japan.

## **Job-hunt à la Japan Inc.**

*A combination of networking, research and luck should eventually land you a good job. If you want to stay in Japan, start searching early and be aware of your potential value to your firm in Japan.*

Hundreds of JET alumni continue to work in Japan after the JET Programme. Use this connection. Do not take the first job that comes along unless you are certain it is the one for you. Do not settle for a lower salary and long hours. A contract is necessary for employment authorization at the Japanese Immigration Office. Remember that switching to a tourist visa or cultural status while searching for a job is illegal.

Be aware of unfulfilled promises. As is widely publicized, Japanese agreements are often quite different from what have been initially discussed. Beware of *kokusaitekina* companies who are interested in hiring foreigners with the hope of meeting the goal of internationalisation, but, after hiring you, they do not know what to do with you (sound familiar?)!

The Japanese tax system is extremely complex. Ask your prospective employers whether they are willing to help you to figure out your taxes. The best place to start looking is with the research librarian at your Embassy or Consulate in Japan.

He or she will be able to provide you with information on all the companies doing business between your country and Japan. The Chambers of Commerce from your home country will also provide invaluable assistance. Most offer a free publication to members (except for the US, which charges 4,000 yen) that list companies from home doing business in Japan and a resume service for a fee. Most JET's gain employment with foreign companies doing business in Japan. Make a list of the companies that interest you and have specific questions when you contact them. The Chambers also keep updated files of placement agencies, hence the need to be able to specify what you are looking for.

#### **American Chamber of Commerce, Japan**

Bridgestone Toranomom Bldg, 5F, 3-25-2 Toranomom, Minato-ku,  
Tokyo 105-0001 Tel: (03) 3433-5381 web page: <http://www.accj.or.jp>

#### **The Japan-US Educational Commission**

Sanno Grand Bldg #207, 2-14-2 Nagata-Cho, Chiyoda-ku,  
Tokyo, Tel: (03) 3580-3235  
Provides information on colleges in the US and guidelines for teaching  
positions in Japan

#### **Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Japan**

Riku Bldg. 3F 4-2 Kojimach, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0083  
Tel: 03-3556-9566 web page: <http://www.cccj.or.jp>

#### **British Chamber of Commerce, Japan**

Kenkyusha Eigo Centre Bldg 3F, 1-2 Kagurazaka, Shinjuku-ku,  
Tokyo 162-0825, Tel: (03) 3267-1901, E-mail: [bccj@majic.ne.jp](mailto:bccj@majic.ne.jp)

**Australia and New Zealand Chamber of Commerce, Japan**

Australian Business Centre 28F New Otani Garden Court  
4-1 Kioi Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo Tel: 03-5214-0710 E-mail: [anzccj@gol.com](mailto:anzccj@gol.com)  
<http://www2.gol.com/users/anzccj>

The Australia Business Centre also houses key Federal and State export, investment and tourism organisations, as well as Australian businesses and industrial organisations.

**The Résumé/CV and the interview**

On the topic of Japanese interviews, there is good news and bad news. Firstly, those of you who suffer from “interview panic syndrome” should relax. If your appearance is neat and you have mastered the art of ultra-politeness, the interview should be a snap. Most people report that an interview is more of an informal session in a relaxed atmosphere—like a café or restaurant—rather than a concrete information gathering process leading to decision-making. It appears that the interview is more a confirmation of your entry into the new “family,” particularly if you landed it through the introduction of a friend or acquaintance, and is held for the purpose of starting a new relationship.

Now, those who are issue oriented and structurally minded must learn to relax. It seems that Japanese interviews are not geared towards the specifics. The interviewers will most likely ask questions like how you mastered using chopsticks and how on earth you wound up in Japan. They will also probably quiz you on topics that you would normally term discriminatory e.g., family, spouse, etc. Be prepared for a dig at your personal life.

Most people report that they did not need a résumé, or that they prepared only an English version. This however, will depend on whether or not you have been introduced to your employer through a friend, and the type of job for which you are applying. Most Japanese language jobs will require a Japanese résumé, and employers will not have much use for an English one. Standard forms, called *rirekisho*, can be picked up at most stationary shops.

Write only in blue or black pen, with the stress being on writing. Giving a typewritten résumé is a little like giving a hand-written one back home (no doubt kanji technique is a source of invaluable insight regarding the psyche). The requirements for resumes and interviews do vary from company to company, so call and check in advance.

More often than not, you will be required to sit a standard written test about your knowledge of the company, etc., alongside other applicants.

Finally, while many people have seen Japanese ability itself as a ticket into most jobs in Japan, this seems to no longer be the case. This ability certainly helps, and for many jobs is essential, but without other solid skills (computers, business, teaching) and connections, jobs are becoming increasingly harder to grab.

### **Everyday life and your decision to stay**

Give yourself six months to adapt to the new job and life-style. Be reserved initially, and show that you are a hard worker and dedicated to your job. Do not expect anything radically different. Of course you will not be treated as royalty anymore, you will not be exempted from taxes, you will not have the option of working shorter hours, and of course you will be discriminated against, since your employer will almost certainly be Japanese. You will be subjected to what could be called “positive” discrimination: receiving a higher monthly salary than your Japanese colleagues but smaller bonuses; more vacation days; being the focus of a little bit of extra attention, if you see what I mean.

You should question your reasons to stay in Japan. Examine your level of satisfaction in interacting with the Japanese on a day-to-day basis, and your capacity to tolerate minor annoyances (major in some cases). If you are not happy, do make a point of leaving. While life everywhere has its ups and downs, spending your days in perpetual misery is no fun, and not only affects your own life, but the lives of others around you.

To wrap up: be patient, and think carefully about your daily work

life is going to be like, do not go just for the money. Remember in Japan “unofficial” contacts like lunches, parties, ski trips, etc., are often as or more important than the interviews themselves. Try and get to know the companies at which you are applying and the people who work there.

### **Professional associations**

#### **The Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan, Tokyo.**

This is a good contact point for anyone considering a career in journalism or public relations. They hold information on magazines and newspaper that hire native English speakers. 1-7-1 Yurakucho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100, Tel: (03) 3211-3161, Fax: (03) 3211-3168.

#### **The Kaisha Society**

(Tel: (03) 5562-0382) Support for foreign employees of Japanese companies in Tokyo and throughout Japan. Meetings are held every third Wednesday of the month.

#### **Foreign Executive Women**

Support and networking contacts for foreign women working in Tokyo. Job listings are posted at meetings (2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month). Contact FCCJ for more details.

#### **Forum for Corporate Communications (FCC)**

Tel: (03) 3260-5744 This is a support organisation for professionals within the field of communication/public relations and a good contact point for those looking for a career in this field.

#### **Society of Writers Editors and Translators (SWET)**

1-12-30 Minami-cho, Kokubunji, Tokyo 185-0021 Fax: 042-320-5278  
E-mail: [swet@infopage.net](mailto:swet@infopage.net) Web page: <http://www.infopage.net/swet>

### **Career planning centres**

While principally directed towards students, job seekers may also want to check out one of the following centres:

Tokyo Students Employment Office,  
1-3-12 Misaki-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101, Tel: (03) 3239-5210.

Japan International Training Association,  
3-11 Kanda-Surgadai, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101, Tel: (03) 3239-0571.

Tokyo Employment Service Center for Foreigners,  
Teito Honsya Building 1F, 2-7-10 Misaki-cho, Chiyoda-ku,  
Tokyo 101-0061, Tel: (03) 3239-4370, Fax: (03) 3239-4382,  
<http://www.tokyo-hellowork.go.jp/foreign>

### **Personnel agencies**

For information on other agencies, consult *Townpage*, the national English Telephone directory.

**Borgman Human Development Institute Ltd.** - Daisan Taihei Bldg,  
1-25-3 Higashi Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku, Tokyo, Tel: (03) 3983-4897.

**East West Consulting K.K.** - Chichibuya Bdg 4F, Kojimachi 3-7-4,  
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0082 Tel: (03) 3222-5531  
Participates in the Tokyo leavers' conference. Recommended by  
ex-JETs

**H&R Consultants** - 204 Daiei Bldg, 3-15-21 Maronouchi, Naka-ku,  
Nagoya 460, Tel: (052) 973-3957 <http://www.japanhomesearch.com>  
Provide a wide range of consulting services for the Nagoya region.

**Marubeni Personnel Support** - Daiai Funato Bldg., 1-11-11 Kudankita,  
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102, Tel: 03-3234-1325, E-mail:  
[ps-tak@marinet.or.jp](mailto:ps-tak@marinet.or.jp)  
<http://www.marinet.or.jp/com/mps>

Place native speakers within Japanese companies focussing on  
language-related positions.

**Oak Associates K.K.**

Tokyo: Aoki Bldg. 3F 4-1-10 Toranomom, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-0001.  
Tel: 03-5472-7077 E-mail: [info@oakassociates.co.jp](mailto:info@oakassociates.co.jp)

Osaka: Nishii Bldg. 6F 1-15-14 Utsubo-hon machi, Nishi-ku, Osaka  
550-0004 Tel: 06-6441-2581 <http://www.oakassociates.co.jp>

Recommended by business professionals at CLAIR career conferences.  
Offers assistance with relocation and orientation, training courses and  
seminars.

**Disco International Inc. (DICR)**

\*Japan: 2-12 Shimomiyabi-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 162,  
Tel: (03) 5228-0250 E-mail: [dissec@po.iinet.or.jp](mailto:dissec@po.iinet.or.jp)

\*Europe: 125 New Bond St, London W1Y 9AP, UK Tel: (0207)  
493-1533, E-mail: [David@dicr.demon.co.uk](mailto:David@dicr.demon.co.uk) web page:  
<http://www.dicr.co.uk>

\*USA: Carnegie Tower Hall 27F, 152 West 57<sup>th</sup> St, New York, USA,  
Tel: (212) 489-2040 <http://www.discointer.com/themovie.html>

Recruits bilinguals. Publishes a guide for those seeking placement with a Japanese company or with foreign firms trading with Japan. Hold job fairs for proficient bilinguals.

**Korakuen English Centre** - 4-15-7 5F, Nishi Shinjuku, Tokyo 160-0623. Tel: 03-3376-0331 <http://www.koraku-ec.co.jp/KEC1E.htm>  
A placement agency for private English teachers

## **Job tips**

### **Global online**

Regularly have openings for skilled professionals. CVs by fax, or text only E-mail: GOL, AS Bldg, 6-16-11 Honcho, Nakano-ku, Tokyo 164-0012, Tel: (03) 5341-8000, Fax: (03) 5341-8001, E-mail: [jobs@gol.com](mailto:jobs@gol.com)

### **Line media inc.**

Takagi Heights 5F, 7-8-4 Minami Aoyama, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107  
Tel: (03) 3499-2399, <http://www.linemediaco.jp> Established by an ex-pat with a wide range of IT holdings. Offer positions to ex-JETs.

### **Print resources**

*1997 Access Nippon Business Handbook: How to Succeed in Japan.* Contains a list of Japanese and foreign affiliated companies. Hoovers Inc., Tel: (03) 5395-4800. US\$49.95.

*Jobs in Japan.* 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, John Wharton. Gives listings and addresses of English schools that are potential employers. Only for those interested in teaching English. US\$14.95

*How to Land Jobs in Japan.* R. E. Joyce, Dawn Press. US\$10.75.

*A Guide to Jobs in Japan.* James Gibbs. Global Village Media Co. 1998. Provides listings of 4000 EFL schools, 1500 foreign companies, & 100 guest houses.

### **Internet resources**

Japan Internet Communications <http://www.jics.com>

Tokyo Classified <http://www.tokyoclassified.com>

Jobs in Japan  
<http://www.jobsinjapan.com>

Human Join  
<http://www.humanjoin.com>

Asia Net <http://www.asia-net.com>

<http://www.humandream-worldwide.com>

<http://www.midcareer.com>  
<http://www.japanesejobs.com>  
<http://www.mrjapanese.com>  
<http://www.us-japan.org/najasjobbank/jobbank1.asp>

## **A woman's perspective within Japan Inc.**

*Linda Boonyuen Owens was an ALT in Nagasaki. She currently works as an overseas buyer for the trade department of a Japanese company.*

Ambition: A word that is seemingly straightforward with no room for misunderstanding. Nevertheless, depending on the individual and nationality, ambition manifests itself in a variety of forms. Whether you are the CEO of a company or the only minority in a traditionally white-dominated occupation, the factors of success would definitely include this word. I started my job search many months before the end of my third-year contract. Fortunately I discovered a job opening that seemed to give me everything I lacked coming into JET as a fresh university graduate: a chance to work in the overseas trade department of a Japanese company—an excellent opportunity to gain some solid business experience and perfect my Japanese.

After being selected, I was thoroughly relieved and believed the hardest part was over. Actually the most difficult part was just beginning.

I assumed I would be afforded the same conditions as the other two foreigners employed by the company who just happened to be ex-JETs. Wrong. My contract had several additional conditions that the two foreign male employees' contracts did not. These additions included a two-month probationary work period, a six-month contract rather than one-year as advertised, and the big whammy, a salary that was significantly lower compared to the foreign men's.

After listening patiently to the complete contract explanation, I maintained a cool exterior although I was fuming up to my eyeballs. Then I asked why my salary was lower than the other two foreigners currently employed. Apparently the personnel officer was anticipating this question. He explained there were three reasons: I was younger than the other two foreign employees were, I had no business experience, and my job would be primarily

secretarial and similar to an *arubaito* (part time position). Sheer anger at this blatant injustice surged through me. Since my interview, they had downscaled the job description to fit my perceived lower ability. I decided I would not be taken advantage of by vague statements and half-truths about the revised job description, and I would get to the root of each disqualifying statement.

To my own amazement, I composed myself and explained to the personnel officer that although I was a few years younger than the male employees, I was as capable as them because we all worked as ALTs for three years before entering the company. I also pointed out that both men were my acquaintances and neither had any prior business experience. Then I requested a comparison of their job duties to my prospective job description, which I had already received at the interview, and ultimately they were indistinguishable.

The contract negotiation took several days. Nonetheless, I did not undersell myself and persevered for the same salary as the other two foreigners. Through persistence and a firm stance, I finally earned their offer for an equal salary and basically the same conditions as the others. Does this story strike an indignant nerve somewhere inside of you? Believe me, as an Asian-American who grew up in the Deep South, I found this experience surreal. I never thought it would be necessary to debate and prove fundamental rights such as equal pay for equal work, non-discriminatory conditions regardless of gender and so on. For many Western foreigners who take these liberties for granted, this can be a sever awakening to Japanese reality. It can be particularly disturbing after a job as comfortable and idealistic as the Jet Programme.

Passiveness has never been one of my characteristics, but ambition has been. There are many things in Japan that I over look in order to accept it as a whole. This job experience was worth all my effort, no matter how difficult to swallow the negotiation process. In the case that something is not right, I cannot recommend that you act

as strongly as I did, unless of course it is already in your nature. My distinct advantages were that I knew the situation of the foreign male employees, and I can be outspoken not only in English but also in Japanese. As long as you are aware of your personal worth and feel comfortable with the said conditions, then that is all that matters. Be at peace with your own decisions. If neither compromise nor a firm approach appeals to you, you always have the choice to return home.

Keep in mind that you are the foreigner, and you must play by their rules. Do not make your rationale liberal or feminist because it does not apply here: Make your reasoning personal because it affects you. If you decide to create a niche in Japan, remember that it does not take much to be a pioneer. Be proactive without being critical, and employers who are truly interested in you will be swayed by the simplicity of your argument and your obvious ambition.

## **That teaching thing ...**

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### **TEFL in Japan**

For JETs who want to continue teaching, English positions are plentiful. Options that require little more than college degree and native fluency range from local conversation schools or the corporate variety, to non-JET ALT positions that offer similar compensation packages to JET. College and university positions are also available to those who have professional qualifications and experience.

JET's interested in pursuing a teaching career in Japan should be aware that in many schools the situation may not be any better than the one you found in the public school system while on JET. Foreign teachers in private Japanese schools still often ask themselves if communicative methods will ever make their way into Japanese classrooms.

Unfortunately public and private schools alike seem to be plagued by a communication and confidence bug. As a consequence,

all-out creative teaching is a flame still smothered in Japan, and teachers are often forced to manage unwieldy grammar-based techniques with a few rigid, carefully set communicative and creative ones thrown in. On the bright side, you will find that in a private school the possibility to make real progress does exist. You are given greater freedom to decide what you will teach, although this depends on the school.

### **Corporate language schools in Japan**

Getting work at corporate language schools is not difficult. Shane Schools, NOVA, ECC, AEON and GEOS all recruit employees from abroad; however, GEOS is strict about recruiting from outside of Japan only, so if you are after this school, you will have to go home to apply.

Find out as much about the school as you can before signing a contract. At NOVA for example, while you may teach an occasional off-text lesson, you are mostly required to use the dreaded Streamline series. Berlitz is another standard textbook school and follows the Direct Method. In Japan this is the preferred method. At these schools at least, it does produce results.

#### **AEON Language Schools**

2-3-23 Kousei Cho, Okayama, 700-861. Tel (AEON): (086) 222-6378,  
Tel (Amity): (086) 224-1611. Web page: <http://www.aeonet.com>

Aeon has TEFL positions throughout the world. They specialize in CALL and have two businesses: AEON, which caters to high school, university and adults; and Amity, for children. Contracts are minimum one-year, and a week usually involves 25 hours teaching with 11 hours prep. Applicants require a four-year degree, Japanese is helpful and EFL is preferred. Apply three to four months ahead of your desired start date with a résumé and essay.

#### **Berlitz Language Schools Inc.**

Akasaka Annex 4F,17-42 Akasaka 2 chome,Minato-ku, Tokyo 107  
Tel: (03) 3505-3356, Fax: (03) 3582-7393.

Has 320 language centres across the world, publishes many language books and guides, and is involved in teaching to businesses. Berlitz Japan was taken over by a Japanese firm several years ago

and is based in Tokyo. It has taken to hiring only part-time employees. They recruit translators, interpreters and cross-cultural trainers, as well as teachers. Apply directly to the centre of your choice.

### **GEOS**

GEOS Corporation, Ontario: Simpsons Tower, Suite 2424, 401 Bay St,  
Toronto, ON M5H 2YA, Canada Fax: (416) 777-0110

GEOS Language Ltd: Bow Bells House, Bread St, London EC4M 9BQ,  
UK Fax: (0207) 822-1785.

GEOS have 350 language schools in Japan and a further 27 in other countries, minimum monthly salary of ¥250,000, with a minimum contract of a year. They also provide training and key money. You MUST apply from outside Japan to the centre of your choice by résumé, and be available to start within four months. You must pay for your flight to Japan, but you receive a ¥100,000 travel allowance on completion of your contract.

### **NOVA**

Nova Group Head Office, Mido Minami Bldg 8F, 2-3-2 Nishi  
Shinsaibashi, Chuo-ku, Osaka 542, Tel: (066) 213-4244, Fax: (066)  
213-2544.

Nova Group - Tokyo Harajuku Carillon Bldg 4F 1-8-9 Jingu-mae  
Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150 Tel: (03) 3478-3475, Fax: (03) 3478-3222.

NOVA has over 280 schools. They offer a minimum one-year contract, with a five-day working week, teaching classes and working in their conversation lounges. Salaries vary across the country, but the minimum is ¥250,000 per month. They help with training, visa, and accommodation arrangements. The company also provides transfer opportunities. NOVA provides you with the standard two days off per week and somewhere around ten vacation days per contract period. Do not expect weekends off. On the flip side, it is very easy to switch hours around with other teachers, making NOVA one of the more flexible schools for which to work. Apply three months ahead of your desired start date.

Nova Teachers' Union Web

<http://www.ne.jp/asahi/chris/home/nut/index.html>

### **Shane English Schools Japan (Saxoncourt)**

Saxoncourt UK 59 South Molton St, London W1Y 1HH, UK,  
Tel: (0207) 491-1911, Fax: (0207) 493-3657. E-mail:  
[recruit@saxoncourt.com](mailto:recruit@saxoncourt.com)

There are 144 language schools in Japan, predominantly in the Kanto area. The school only employs qualified EFL teachers. Recruitment also involved in teacher training, publishing, and their schools in other countries. A Career Teacher Scheme will allow teachers to study for the Dip TEFL for free after two years with a group school.

## **JALT and beyond**

*Chris Clancy has been a Nagasaki ALT and JALT member since 2000*

For the prospective language teacher there are several teaching associations in Japan that are worth checking out. These include the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT), English Teachers in Japan (ETJ) and Little America Teaching Methods (LATEM).

The oldest and best known of the associations is JALT. An especially inviting reason to join JALT is to get an idea of the trends affecting English language teaching in Japan. As one former JET, now teaching at university in Aomori put it, “There are basically two types of ESL movements in the world: that of the rest of the world, and that which can be adapted to Japan’s unique situation.” Involvement in JALT allows you to improve your understanding of ESL/EFL within the context of current language education in Japan.

The meetings are a great place for teachers to share experiences and come up with solutions for problems unique to teaching English in Japan. A current ALT reports that his supervisor belongs to JALT and often attends conferences which she says usually feature speakers who are big international names in the broad field of language teaching and applied linguistics, as well as important Japan and East Asia specialists.

Though times have changed and money is tight, many private high schools as well as commercial language schools have tended to pay for their teachers to attend JALT conferences and other such related events. One former Chief Advisor to ALT’s in a municipal non-JET program cites that JALT participation was the only extra-curricular EFL activity his city’s board of education would pay for.

JALT is also a tremendous resource for making contacts and learning about job openings. In addition JALT publications are valuable resources that include interviews with noted language teachers. What’s more, JALT leadership responds personally and

directly to request fore assistance and advice of its members. JALT is very good for networking, publishes a monthly magazine and also maintains a Job Information Centre that foreigners are welcome to use.

### **JALT membership**

The regular annual membership for people within Japan is ¥10,000. Joint memberships for two people who share the same address are ¥8,500 per person. Student membership is ¥6,500. Group memberships are ¥6,500 per person for a group of five or more. One copy of each publication is sent to each address.

A regular subscription to The Language Teacher is ¥8,000. Special interest groups are open to JALT members at the rate of ¥1,500 each. Annual membership fees for people outside of Japan vary but must be payable in Japanese yen. Memberships by sea mail are available for all countries at ¥9,000. Airmail memberships in other Asian countries are ¥10,750 each and airmail memberships to all other countries are ¥12,000.

*Thanks to JALT members Todd Jay Leonard and Michael Mathis (former ALTs) and Anthony Crooks (former ALT Chief Advisor)*

JALT Central Office - Urban Edge building, 5F 1-37-9 Taito, Taito-ku  
Tokyo 1100016 Tel: 3- 3837-1630 E-mail: [jalt@gol.com](mailto:jalt@gol.com)  
<http://www.jalt.org/>

ETJ (David English House)  
<http://eltnews.com/ad/ETJ>

LATEM

<http://www.littleamerica.co.jp/en/main/topemainframe.html>  
The Japan Association of College English Teachers (JACET)  
<http://www.jacet.org>

## **TEFL Japan resource list**

### **Internet resources**

<http://www.ohayosensei.com> Japan's #1 site  
<http://www.teaching-jobs.org> One stop shopping  
<http://teachinginjapan.com>

<http://gaijinpot.com>

<http://bilingual-jobs.com> E-mails information on job vacancies involving Japanese according to your profile.

<http://www.global-reach.net> Collates information on English teaching positions within Japanese universities and language schools, which is then published in a magazine that can be ordered from their web site.

<http://www.eltnews.com> a web site for English teachers in Japan with a job listing that is updated daily.

<http://www.interac.co.jp/recruit/> a private language company that offers teaching and ALT positions.

### **Publications**

*The Language Teacher*, The Japanese Association of Language Teachers (JALT). A monthly magazine available at most bookstores.

*Japan Study and Teaching Guide*, Paul Abramson. Available from Tokyo Central for ¥1,200. Lists Japanese and English language schools

*The Handbook for Teaching English at Japanese Colleges and Universities*. (Wadden: Oxford 1993)

*English in Asia: Teaching Tactics for Japan, Korea, and Taiwan*. Global PR. US \$12.95

### **Finding a TEFL job: world overview**

*Louise Elliot was an ALT in Kanazawa, Ishikawa-ken and is a qualified TEFL teacher.*

One of the great perks about teaching is that it provides a passport around the world, and in most cases, the funds to pay for it. Although you have been a TEFL teacher on the JET Programme, you may find jobs outside of Japan harder to land without a recognised qualification.

Susan Griffith's *Teaching English Abroad* supplies everything you will need to know about qualifications, visa problems, and opportunities available. Its country-by-country section lists the addresses, conditions, average wages and benefits, etc., of hundreds of schools all over the world. Despite a slightly British angle, it carefully notes any nationality biases that schools may have, and, when relevant, information specific to North Americans is included.

Vacation Work, 9 Park End St, Oxford OX1 1HJ, UK,

Tel: (01865) 241978, Fax: (01865) 790885.

<http://www.vacationwork.co.uk>

Transitions Abroad's web services are also an excellent source of information on qualifications, programs and employment opportunities in TEFL worldwide.  
<http://www.transitionsabroad.com>

The most lucrative TEFL jobs are in the Gulf States, but you will need pre-arranged contracts. (The Arab states prefer, or only accept, single men.) Japan, Taiwan and Korea are the next best bets for money, in addition to Brunei, if you have considerable experience. Recently, Taiwan and Korea have started tightening up on their "tourist teachers," but like Japan, under the table jobs still exist if you are just passing through.

There is a great demand for English teachers in China from kindergarten positions to lectureships at Chinese universities. It is a job-seekers market where, as one English teacher in China put it, "Anyone with a pulse, walking and breathing can get a job." If you do your research, and have the qualifications, it is possible, though rare, to earn the equivalent of an American teacher's wage. China is certainly the place to be watching in the future. There are so many people teaching English in cultural centres such as Italy and Greece that rates are fairly poor. Throughout the EU, jobs are much harder to procure if you are not a citizen of one of those countries.

In South America, where many TEFL jobs are easily found, many schools prefer American English. Like in East Asia, many teachers in Latin America teach unofficially on tourist visas due to the hassles in getting work permits. Eastern Europe is one of the easiest places to land a job with minimal fuss, but also minimal pay. You may just break even with a great cultural experience to boot. If you are TEFL certified here are some of the better-known schools that regularly recruit teachers just about everywhere.

**The British Council** 90-1 Tottenham Court Rd, London W1P 0DT,  
UK.

Tel: (0207) 580-6572. Web page: <http://www.britcoun.org>

Stipends above anything you could find at most private language schools. Respected the world over. TEFL Diploma is required for most postings.

**USIA (United States Information Agency)** - English Language Programs Division, 301 4<sup>th</sup> St SW, Washington DC 20547-0001. Tel: (202) 485-2869.

The American equivalent of the British Council. Operates language programmes in many developing countries.

**International House** - 106 Piccadilly, London W1V 9FL, UK.

Tel: (0207) 491-2598, Fax: (0207) 495-0689.

<http://www.international-house-london.ac.uk>

Over 100 schools in almost 30 countries. Prefers RSA/Cambridge TEFL qualifications. Recruitment for around 350 teaching posts each year. Contracts are for one year (renewable). In addition to salary and paid holidays, help with accommodation and return flights are provided.

**The KET Programme** – Korean version of JET through the Ministry of Education. Seoul Korea Tel: 02-720-3440, Japan Tel: 092-651-3591

**ELS Language Centres** – International Division, 5761 Buckingham Parkway, Culver City, CA 90230-6583 USA Tel: 310-642-0988

Fax 310-649-5231 E-mail: [international@els.com](mailto:international@els.com)

Schools in 90+ locations worldwide. Provides training, degree required.

**Wall Street Institute International** – Torre Mapfre, Marina 16-18,  
08005 Barcelona, Spain

A rapidly expanding chain of schools in Europe and Latin America. It appears that only a degree is necessary.

**TESOL Inc.** – 1600 Cameron Street, Suite 300, Alexandria, Virginia  
22314 USA Tel: 703-836-0774 Fax: 703-836-7864

E-mail [tesol@tesol.edu](mailto:tesol@tesol.edu) Web page <http://www.tesol.org/index.html>

## **World TEFL Resources**

### **Internet resources**

CALL <http://www-writing.berkeley.edu/chorus/call/calljobs.html>

Dave's ESL Café <http://www.eslcafe.com>

Ed-U-Link Services <http://www.edu.link.com>

Great Teacher.net <http://greatteacher.net>

International Schools K-12 <http://www.isk12.com>

TEFL.net <http://www.tefl.net/>  
Internet TESL Journal <http://www.iteslj.org>  
TEFL Professional Network <http://www.tefl.com/courses/>  
Teaching Jobs  
<http://teaching-jobs.org/listings/htm>  
<http://www.kyoto-su.ac.jp/~trobb/langlinks.html>  
<http://www.aitec.ac.jp/~iteslj/links/>  
<http://www.linguistic-funland.com/job.postings.html>

**Print resources:** *101 Grade A Resumes for Teachers*. R. Anthony, Gerald Roe, Barrons, 1998. US \$10.95.

## **Teaching at International Schools**

International Schools educate children of expatriates and rich locals all over the world. They usually recruit only qualified schoolteachers. Minimum contracts are normally two years. Even if you are qualified, these posts will usually require at least two or three years teaching experience in your normal field. If you want to teach abroad long-term, it is probably a very sound idea to go home, get this experience, and then apply. There are several agencies that will help you in the search for such jobs. For most of the world, the best option is:

**The European Council of Schools (ECIS)** - 21 Lavant St, Petersfield, Hampshire, GU32 3EL, UK. <http://www.ecis.org>

Offers a placement service and three of the most comprehensive recruitment fairs in the world. Most services are free—though to gain an invitation you must get three professional references and fill out several forms. 400 schools worldwide.

**The International Schools Service (ISS)** - ISS, Educational Staffing Program PO Box 5910, Princeton, NJ 08543, USA Tel: (609) 452-0990  
<http://www.iss.edu>

ISS has placed K-12 teachers and administrators since 1955. Candidates obtain their positions by going to USA Recruitment Centres for interviews with overseas administrators. Only active ISS members can attend. Need a BA and two years of current relevant experience. Registration materials provided upon application approval. There is a fee of \$600 after completion.

### **Friends of World Teaching**

PO Box 121049, San Diego, CA 92112-1049, USA Tel: (800) 503-7436  
<http://www.fowt.com>

Places hundreds of teachers, coaches, counsellors and administrators in English-speaking schools and colleges in over 100 countries, including Japan. Foreign languages are not required for most placements.

**International recruitment fairs**

Some North American universities hold International Recruitment Fairs each year. Registration requires a teaching certificate from the USA or Canada and willingness to sign a two-year contract. Most successful candidates have two or more years of relevant teaching experience and are single or part of a teaching couple. Due to visa, housing and salary restrictions, most international schools cannot hire a teacher with a non-teaching spouse.

**Ohio State University** - Placement Services, 110 Arps Hall,  
1945 N. High St. Columbus, OH 43210, USA Tel: (614) 292-2741  
Hosts 20 international employers. The registration packet costs US\$5.00. Publishes a weekly on-line vacancy bulletin called *The Source*.

**The University of Northern Iowa (UNI)** - Overseas Placement Service for Educators, SSC #19, Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0390, USA.

Tel: (319) 273-2083, Fax: (319) 273-6998

<http://www.edu/placemnt/student/internat.html>

Hosts administrators from over 100 schools in 60 countries. The registration fee includes a bimonthly newsletter with vacancy listings and the UNI Overseas Fact Sheet Book, (200 pages of detailed information on US international schools plus informative articles about the overseas job search, contracts, etc.) Non-registrants can subscribe to the newsletter for US\$50, and get a copy of the fact book for \$30.

**Queen's University Placement Office** - Faculty of Education,  
Kingston, ON, K7L 3N6, Canada. Tel: (613) 545-6222

<http://www.educ.queensu.ca/~placemnt>

Hosts about 40 employers. Registration materials are available in September. The fee is CDN \$100.

**Association of American Schools in South America (AASSA)**

14750 NW 77<sup>th</sup> Court, #210 Miami Lakes, FL 33016-1507, USA

Tel: (305) 821-0345, Fax: (305) 821-4244 web page:

<http://www.aassa.com>

**Michigan State University Career Services and Placement**

113 Student Services Building, East Lansing, MI 48824-1113, USA

Tel: (517) 335-9510, Fax: (517) 353-2597

**Search Associates** - PO Box 636, Dallas, PA 18612, USA  
Tel: (717) 696-5400, Fax: (717) 696-9500  
In Canada: Tel: (613) 967-4902, Fax: (613) 967-8981.

## **Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language**

There is a demand for teachers of Japanese, particularly in Australia and New Zealand, and getting into a teaching program there is usually fairly easy. In Britain, university career services keep a list of vacancies on PGCE (Post-Graduate Certificate of Education) courses. Places are available right up until the last moment, especially for sciences. However, places for Japanese teaching are very rare.

### **Japan**

National Language Institute <http://kokken.go.jp/jsl>  
Bojinsha <http://bojinsha.com>  
Japan Forum <http://wwwwtjf.or.jp>  
ALC Nihongo Centre  
<http://www.alc.co.jp/nihongo>  
Japan Foundation  
<http://www.jpf.go.jp/j/urawa>  
Nihongo Kyoiku Gakkai <http://wwwsoc.nii.ac.jp.nkg>

### **Australia and New Zealand**

Japanese Studies Association  
<http://unimelb.edu.au/jssa/>  
Modern Language Teacher's Association, Australia  
<http://www.afmlta.asn.au>  
New Zealand Association of Japanese Language Teachers  
<http://www.japan.or.nz/cultural.japanlanguage.html>

### **Europe**

Association of Japanese Language Teachers in Europe  
<http://www.castelj.soken.ac.jp/groups/aje>  
British Association for Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language  
<http://essex.ac.uk/centres/japan/batj>

### **USA and Canada**

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages  
<http://www.actfl.org>

## **Volunteer Work**

### **Around the World**

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#### **Volunteer Opportunities in Japan**

Volunteers are needed in public relations, counselling, computing, editing, finance, marketing, outdoor activities, research, sales, teaching, translating, interpreting and writing. For in-depth information, pick up *Volunteering in Japan*, Foreign Executive Women's Community Relations Committee.

#### **Volunteer organisations, Tokyo**

Japan Help-line (0120) 46-1997  
International Volunteer Centre (03) 3834-2388  
International Movement  
Against All Forms of Racism (03) 3586-7447  
HIV Centre (03) 5259-0622  
Micaela Ryo (Women's Shelter) (045) 251-4023 in Yokohama  
Rape Crisis Centre (03) 3207-3692  
Volunteer Centre (03) 3235-1171  
Global Village (03) 3705-0233  
Make-A-Wish Happen (03) 3345-1745  
The Asia Foundation (03) 3441-8291  
Caring for Young Refugees (03) 3353-9947  
Hand-in-Hand, Chiba (043) 224-2154  
House for Women "Saalaa" (045) 901-3527 in Yokohama  
(Japanese or Asian languages)

## **Internet Resources**

Tokyo Voluntary Action Centre

<http://www.tvac.or.jp/english/index.html>

Foreign Executive Women Volunteer Directory

<http://www.few.gol.com/volunteer/index.htm>

Osaka Voluntary Action Centre

<http://cwlzaq.ne.jp/osakavol/english/index.html>

Centre for International Exchange and Non-profit Sector Development in Japan

<http://www.icie.or.jp/civilnet/nonprofit¥sector.html>

Non-profit Japan (Ohdake Foundation)

<http://www.igc.org/ohdakefoundation/index.htm>

The NGO Café by Hari Srinivas

<http://www.gdrc.org/ngo/japan-ngo.html>

## **International Volunteer Opportunities**

These days volunteer organisations are becoming pickier about whom they recruit and solid qualifications are a must. A few years of JET, a teaching certificate or a technical degree (e.g. medicine, engineering, biology) will work to your advantage. Most contract periods run anywhere from two months to two years, depending on the agency. Expect to fill out an extensive application form and go through several interviews, just to volunteer! Moreover, application processing can take up to six months, so apply early. On the positive side volunteer work is a great experience. Also, you are never too old to volunteer, so if you think you are getting up there, you will probably find yourself working alongside people of all ages.

### **The Peace Corps**

1990 K St NW, Box 941 Washington DC 20526, USA

Tel: (202) 606-3780 or (800) 424-8580 (toll free within US)

The Corps offers support, training, and a re-adjustment allowance of more than \$5400 when you finish the two-year contract. Apply at least nine months ahead of your desired start date. The Corps has English language programs in over 70 countries. Volunteers must be US or Canadian residents and placements are for two years. You can request an application through the Peace Corps' Web Site <http://www.peacecorps.gov>, or toll-free (800) 424-8580, accessible only from US.

## VSO

*United Kingdom:* 317 Putney Bridge Rd, London SW15 2PN UK  
Tel: (0208) 780-7500 (24hrs) Web page <http://www.vso.org.uk>  
*Canada:* 135 Ridean St. Ottawa, ON, K1N 9K7, Canada  
<http://www.oneworld.org/vso>

Places around 2000 volunteers per year in 59 countries in Asia, Africa, Central & Eastern Europe; Pacific and Caribbean. Volunteers are paid a local salary; receive airfare, accommodation, and a stipend at the end of the contract. Teaching contracts are normally for two years. A degree and a TEFL certificate are preferred. Volunteers must be UK or Canadian residents.

### World Teach

Harvard Institute for International Development - 1 Eliot Street,  
Cambridge, MA 02138, USA, Tel (617) 495-5527

A non-profit programme of Harvard University. Volunteers should have a degree and TEFL qualification. A fee is payable of approximately \$3500 to cover airfares, insurance and support services. Accommodation and a local salary are provided.

### United Nations Development Programme

United Nations Development Programme, One United Nations Plaza,  
New York, New York 10017 USA

UNDP Tokyo Office, UNU Bldg. 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, 5-53-Jingumae, Shibuya-ku,  
Tokyo 150-0001 Japan Tel: 813-5467-4751

Hires "experts" for development assistance in democratic governance, poverty reduction, environmentally sustainable development, disaster mitigation, aids awareness advocacy and coalition building, information and communications technology.

UN Capital Development Fund <http://www.uncdf.org>  
UN Development Fund for Women <http://undp.org/unifem>  
United Nations Volunteers <http://www.unv.org>  
Employment  
<http://www.undp.org/jobs>

## Internet Resources

### General information

Japan-U.S. Community Education and Exchange  
<http://www.jucee.org>  
Humanitarian Village (French-English)  
<http://www.humanitarianvillage.com>

World Social Forum (Portuguese, Spanish, French and English)

<http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/eng/index.asp>

International Volunteer Programs Association

<http://volunteerinternational.org>

### **Employment opportunities**

Action Without Borders (153 countries) <http://www.idealists.org>

Craigslist (US, some CN, AUS)

<http://www.craigslist.org>

Non-profit Jobs Clearing House (US)

<http://accessjobs.org>

International Red Cross

<http://www.icrc.org>

UNICEF

<http://www.unicef.org>

UN General Job Posting Web-site <http://icsc.un.org/vab/list.htm>

About Non-profit (Canada) <http://non.profit.about.com/cs/findajob/>

For more information on International Volunteer Organisations see the Travel Information and Advice chapter of this book.

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## **Job Search Information**

### **Australia**

#### **Business Relations with Japan**

For more information about Japanese businesses in Australia and Australia-Japan societies in each Australian State, contact the Japanese Embassy and Consulates listed in the Appendices. Also, due to the ever-expanding Australia-Japan relationship, employment programs have developed which allow Australians to work in Japan.

The Australia-Japan Economic Institute (AJEI),  
Level 11, Chifley Tower, 2 Chifley Square, Sydney, NSW 2000,  
Tel: (02) 9233-8533, Fax: (02) 9233-9503.

JETRO (Melbourne & Sydney)

<http://www.jetro.go.jp/top/links/jetroweb.html>

#### **Personal Agencies**

Japan Down Under, (Japanese language ability)  
143 Brougham St, Potts Point, NSW 2011 Tel: (02) 356-2055.

#### **Networking & Support**

Asia Link Centre (University of Melbourne, The Myer Foundation) aims to increase knowledge of and linkages with the Asian region, and to provide networking opportunities. Currently there are 1000 members throughout Australia and in many Asian cities. In 2001 the centre ran over 100 events, with a fair percentage of them occurring in Sydney and Canberra.

Individual membership costs \$99 and includes free access to the publication *Generation Asia*, the E-mail bulletin *Access Asialink*, access the member-only website, free access to seminars and other events, and other discounts.

<http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au> The e-mail bulletin Access Asialink is free. Subscribe on the web site at the Asialink icon or E-mail [s.lee@asialink.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:s.lee@asialink.unimelb.edu.au)

Asia Education Foundation (AEF) c/o Asialink Centre, University of Melbourne, Parkville, VIC 3052 Tel: (03) 9349-1899  
E-mail: [asialink@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:asialink@unimelb.edu.au)

### **Teaching Japanese**

Japanese Language Teachers' Association of Victoria, The Membership Secretary, PO Box 90, Kingsville VIC 3012 Tel: (03) 9256-2040

Kyozai-L.O.T.E. Teaching Aids 506 Don Rd. Healesville 3777 VIC  
Tel: (03) 5962-5543 E-mail: [kyozai@wire.net.ac](mailto:kyozai@wire.net.ac)

Federal Government policy, which states that 60% of year 10 school students will be studying an Asian language by the year 2006, has increased the demand for qualified Japanese language teachers in all states. Japanese is now offered at many primary and secondary schools. For further information, contact the department of education in the appropriate capital city.

**NSW:** Education Department, Locked Bag No 3003 Blacktown, NSW 2148

**QLD:** Languages & Cultures Education, Education House, 30 Mary St. Brisbane, QLD 4000 Tel: (07) 3237-1884 <http://www.qed.qld.gov.au>

**SA:** Education Department, 31 Flinders St. Adelaide 5000

Tel: (08) 8366-8536

**VIC:** Directorate of School Education Rialto South Tower, 525 Collins St. Melbourne, VIC 3001 Tel: (03) 9628-4422

**WA:** Education Department, 151 Royal Street East Perth, WA 6004

Tel: (09) 264-4111

In addition, many universities, language schools and TAFE colleges offer Japanese language studies at undergraduate or postgraduate levels. Employment possibilities include tutoring (for the school or privately) and/or lecturing on a full or part-time basis.

### **Teaching English**

Second language teaching has expanded in recent years to include both public and private sectors. The demand for ESL specialists is high, due to Australia's multicultural population and a large enrolment of Asian students. Qualified ESL teachers will find employment in areas such as ELICOS departments at universities, Adult Migrant Programs, TAFE Colleges, and in private language schools. The best way to start your job search is to consult the Yellow Pages for private schools and universities, and Education Departments for government positions.

### **The tourism industry**

Australia is currently experiencing an upsurge in overseas visitors, particularly from Japan. To assist and maintain this boom, the Commonwealth government has developed a national tourism strategy designed to encourage development and expansion of tourist facilities and services. Areas with possible opportunities include:

1. International hotel chains – Sheraton, Hilton, Inter-Continental, and Southern Pacific groups operating in capital cities and other popular destinations (e.g. Queensland resorts, Central Australia) may offer opportunities. Japanese tourists often stay at the more expensive, five-star hotels.
2. Duty-free and souvenir shops are hiring more Japanese-speaking staff these days. Try the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Yeppoon, the Great Barrier Reef, Cairns and Port Douglas.
3. Tour Guiding: Many tourists and coach companies now employ Japanese-speaking tour guides on a regular basis. Places include capital cities, Queensland resorts, Central Australia, Phillip Island, VIC, and some winery areas (Hunter Valley, NSW and Barossa Valley, SA).
4. Tourist Offices: Some government and non-government tourist information offices now employ Japanese speakers on a regular basis.

## **Internet resources**

### **Japan related**

Japan Australia Friendship Association (call Mike: 8370-8771)

<http://www.jafa.asn.au>

Australia Web

<http://www.australia.or.jp>

### **Volunteer opportunities**

Go volunteer

<http://www.govolunteer.com.au>

Volunteer Organisations

<http://www.volunteer.org.au>

Volunteers Week

<http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org>

### **Employment**

Careers on line

<http://www.careersonline.com.au>

About.com

<http://www.about-australia.com>

My Career

<http://www.mycareer.com.au>

The Australian

<http://www.australianonline.co.au>

The Financial Review

<http://www.afr.com/australia/>

Sydney Morning Herald

<http://www.smh.com.au>

The Age

<http://theage.com.au>

Government job search page

<http://www.jobsearch.gov.au>

Government Departments

<http://www.access.gov.au>

<http://www.gold.directory.gov.au>

<http://www.dfat.gov.au>

Public Service Gazette

<http://www.fedinfo.gov.au/career/jobs/gazette>

## **Canada**

### **Relations with Japan**

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) has Ni-Ka Online. It examines the Canada-Japan relationship, business and cross-cultural events, on both sides of the Pacific. It has many useful links.

<http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/ni-ka/menu-e.asp>.

National Association of Japanese-Canadians  
404 Webb Place, Winnipeg MB R3B 3J4 Tel: (204) 943-2910  
E-mail [najcwpg@istar.ca](mailto:najcwpg@istar.ca)<http://www.najc.ca>

### **The Japanese Studies Association of Canada**

Is designed to promote Japanese studies in Canada and to make a contribution to increased knowledge of Canada-Japan relations. The association encourages scholars and others to conduct research Japan in all academic fields. JSAAC sponsors an annual conference at which papers are presented on topics relating to Japan-Canada relations and Japan. These papers are published following the conference. The association is in contact with Japanese scholars, officials and business people who are encouraged to share their knowledge with members of JSAC. The organisation has between 80 and 100 members, most of who are professors of Japan logy in Canadian universities. Membership is open to all interested in Japanese studies.

<http://dilll.yorku.ca/jsac.html>

### **Canada – Japan business associations**

JETRO - Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver  
<http://www.jetro.go.jp/top/links/jetroweb.html>

You may also wish to consult one of the three Canadian provinces that have set up Agent-General offices in Tokyo.

Government of Alberta - 3F Place Canada, 7-3-37 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo Tel: (03) 3475-1171/1173

Gouvernement de Québec - 5<sup>th</sup> F, Kojimachi Hiraoka Bldg. 1-3 Kojimachi Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo Tel: (03) 3239-5137 E-mail: [c.tokyo@mri.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:c.tokyo@mri.gouv.qc.ca)

British Columbia Trade and Investment, Tokyo Office - Akasaka  
KSA Bldg 2F 8-10-39 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107- 0052  
Tel: (03) 3408-6171

### **Publications**

*The Kaigai Shinshutsu Kigyo Soran.* (Toyo Keizai) List of firms doing business between Canada and Japan. Copies exist in most major libraries and at the Embassy. ¥14,000

### **Personnel agencies**

Pan-Pacific Personnel (Miyuki Ishizaku )  
Suite 708, 1155 W. Percet St. Vancouver, BC V6B 2P4 Tel: (604)  
801-7407.

E-mail: [panpac@canadex.com](mailto:panpac@canadex.com),

<http://www.canadex.com/panpacific/personnel.html>

Places Bilingual Japanese – English staff with businesses

### **Teaching English**

Qualified TESL/TEFL teachers can find work in the public or private school system, or with immigration and community authorities. For information, contact the adult migrant services department or the education ministry in the province of your choice. The Federal Ministry of Immigration may also be able to provide some leads.

For those interested in teaching ESL in public schools, be forewarned that in provinces with strong teachers' unions the prospects for teaching positions with just an ESL certification are extremely limited. If you are intent on teaching ESL, pursue it via the standard teaching certification or through a Masters degree in applied linguistics.

Canada Educational Services

#205-1201 W Pender St Vancouver, BC, V6E 2V2 Tel: (604) 669-6963

E-mail: [ccv@contactcan.com](mailto:ccv@contactcan.com) Web page: <http://www.contactcan.com>

### **Publications**

*The Canadian TESL Job Guide, and The Overseas TEFL Job Guide.*  
(TESL Centre, Concordia University) Ed. Palmer Acheson 1455  
Boulevard de Maisonneuve Quest, Montreal, Que. H3G 1M8 Tel: (514)  
848-2450, Fax: (514) 848-4295.

## The tourism industry

Canadians who speak Japanese well can easily find jobs such as tour guiding, hotel work, and sales in duty-free and souvenir shops.

Supernatural BC  
Parliament Buildings  
Regina,  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4  
(306)787-2300  
Tel: (604) 387-1642  
<http://www.sasktourism.com>

Tourism Saskatchewan  
500-1900 Albert St.  
Sask S4PL9 Tel:

Travel Links Ontario  
Queen's Park Toronto,  
Fredericton,  
ON M7A 2E5  
Tel: (416) 965-4008

Tourism New Brunswick  
PO Box 6000,  
NB E3B 5H1  
Tel: (506) 444-5793

P. E. I. Dept of Tourism  
178 Water St., Charlottetown  
PEI C1A 8W1 Tel: (902) 368-4444  
667-5340

Tourism Yukon  
PO Box 2703  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Y1A 2C6 Tel: (867)

[www.touryukon.com](http://www.touryukon.com)  
Travel Alberta  
Box 2500 Edmonton,  
AB T5J 2Z4  
Carlton St.  
Tel: (780) 427-4321  
<http://www.explorealberta.com>

<http://>

Travel Manitoba  
Dept 7020, 7F 155

Winnipeg, MB, R3C 3H8

Tourisme Quebec  
CP 20000, Quebec City,  
PQ, G1K 7X2 578  
Box  
Tel: (514) 873-2015

Ministry of Tourism,  
Education and Culture  
4F Trademark Bldg. PO

Halifax, NS B3J 2S9  
Tel: (902) 424-5639

Tourism Newfoundland  
and Labrador  
Yellowknife, NWT  
PO Box 8700 St John's,  
873-5007

NWT Arctic Tourism  
Box 610  
X1A 2N5 Tel: (403)



### **The federal government**

The Canadian Government is one of the largest employers in Canada. It is the official employer of the Public Service of Canada, and also provides funding for hundreds of other employment projects throughout Canada. The first place to start is either your hometown's Human Resources and Development Canada (HRDC) office, or the national website.

<http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca> The Public Service of Canada also has positions offered on its website. <http://www.jobs.gc.ca>

Every year, through the Post-Secondary Recruitment campaigns, numerous positions that might interest ex- JETs are offered. These include Project Officers for CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency), Foreign Service Officers and positions within the department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, among other positions. There are two PSR campaigns every year, in the fall and winter. Most positions require as an absolute minimum a Bachelor's Degree, willingness to relocate, and the completion of the PSR exams, which are offered in October and February. Most positions require that you complete the general exam, and a written exercise.

The positions offered, as well as the requirements, change every campaign, and you must sit the exam for every campaign in which you apply for a position. There are test sites in Japan at the Embassy in Tokyo, as well as in Fukuoka, Nagoya and Osaka. If you are granted an interview for a Public Service position, expect to pay your way to at least the first port of entry to Canada, if not for the entire process.

### **The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Foreign Service Developmental Program**

Two main career paths are open in the Foreign Service: the Administrative (consular) stream, which requires a specific educational background; and the Foreign Service stream (trade, political and immigration officers) that does not.

The Foreign Service Development Program is a five-year program designed to integrate participants into the Foreign Service. Recruits should expect to spend two to four years working in Head Quarters (Ottawa) prior to going abroad for a position of two to three years. Participant's benefit from on the job training as well as structured courses related to their development and particular work activities.

However, participants remain on probation throughout the program, with performance measurements at the 18, 36, 48 and 60-month points. If performance is fully satisfactory, participants will become full-fledged Foreign Service Officers at the 60-month assessment. Successful completion of the program requires proficiency in both French and English. The salary for the FSDP program currently begins at around \$38,000 with maximum compensation ending up around \$50,000.

The Foreign Service Exam consists of three parts: A general reading test, similar to an IQ test and a written competency test that take place in October. These determine eligibility for the third phase: the interview. One of the few world interview spots is usually in Tokyo in March. The Foreign Service interview consists of an interview and a half-day simulation exercise with other candidates designed to test their judgement. The process is rigorous with about 80 new candidates being accepted from around 7,000 applicants a year. For further information and an application package, contact the Canadian Embassy.

### **The Parliamentary Internship Programme**

This is a 10-month programme of the Canadian Political Science Association. Ten candidates are usually chosen. Familiarity with the operation of the parliamentary government in Canada, Canadian citizenship and at least one degree are required. The Programme includes an orientation period, two trips abroad employment with a member of the government and a member of the opposition. Apply by the end of January to

Parliamentary Internship Programme  
Room 1200, La Promenade Bldg, House of Commons Ottawa,  
ON, K1A 0A6 Tel: (613) 995-0764 E-mail: [cartwj@parl.gc.ca](mailto:cartwj@parl.gc.ca)

## **Working holiday program**

Canadians can enter Japan for an extended holiday, and finance their travel through occasional employment. For information contact:

Youth and Personality Exchange Section (ACEE)  
International Academic Relations Branch, 125 Sussex Drive Ottawa,  
ON, K1A G2 Tel: (613) 992-6289 Fax: (613) 992-5965  
<http://www.defait-maeci.gc.ca>

## **United Nations Agencies**

A limited number of Junior Professional Officers are required by UN Agencies, including the World Food Program, UN Development Program, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and UNICEF. You must be a Canadian citizen and permanent resident, under 30 years old, possess a Masters degree, plus meet further requirements unique to each position. Field experience and other languages are assets. Write to: Personnel and Administrative Branch, CIDA, 200 Promenade de Portage, Hull, PC K1A 0G4.

## **Volunteer programs**

### **Canada Crossroads International**

31 Madison Ave, Toronto ON M5R 2S2 Tel: (416) 967-0801  
E-mail: [cci@web.net](mailto:cci@web.net) Web page: <http://www.crossroads-carrefour.ca>

### **Canada World Youth/Jeunesse Canada Monde**

3F 2330 Notre-Dame St. West, Montreal, Que. H3J 1N4  
Tel: (514) 931-3526 Web page: <http://www.cwy-jcm.org>  
Offers international education programs for youth under 30.

### **Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC)**

3F 1 Nicholas St. Ottawa, ON K1N 7B7  
Tel: (613) 236-4547 Web page: <http://www.web.net/ccic-ccci>  
Over one hundred Canadian organisations are working on the front-line of social justice, humanitarian aid, and economic and democratic development in Canada and the developing world.

## **Publications**

*Who's Who in International Development*, (CCIC) A bi-annual directory of Canadian (NGOs). They campaign to eliminate poverty. <http://www.incommon.web.net> Write to CCIC

*What in the World is Going On?* (Canadian Bureau for Int'l Ed) is an excellent book for those wishing to work, volunteer or study in other countries. CBIE, 220 Laurier Ave West, Suite 1100, Ottawa, ON, K1P 5Z9, Tel: (613) 237-4280, E-mail: [publications@cbie.ca](mailto:publications@cbie.ca)  
<http://www.cbie.ca>

## Internet resources

### Japan Canada relations

The Japan Society

<http://japansocietycanada.com>

Nikkei Place, BC

<http://www.nikkeiplace.org>

The Canada Japan Society,

<http://www.cjst.org>

Pan-Asia Networking

<http://www.panasia.org.sg>

Japan/Canada Cultural Centre

<http://jccc.on.ca>

Canada Japan Society

<http://www.canadajapansociety.bc.ca>

Canada Japan Business Association

<http://www.canadajapansociety.bc.ca/alberta/index.htm>

### Volunteer opportunities

Vancouver Volunteers

<http://www.vancouver.volunteer.ca>

Volunteer Network

<http://www.volnet.org>

Non-profit Careers

<http://www.nonprofitcareer.com>

### Employment

Canadian Career Page

<http://www.canadiancareers.com>

Canada's Job Bank

<http://jb-ge.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca>

Brian's Job Search

<http://bmairs.tripod.com>

Cool Jobs Canada

<http://www.cooljobscanada.com>

Canada Career Site

<http://www.iijive.com/canada>

Action Jobs

<http://www.actionjobs.com>

Canada's Job Agent

<http://canada.job-agent.net>

Online Job Search Guide <http://www.canadajobsearch.com>

Blueprint for Life

<http://www.blueprint4life.ca>

Visa jobs

<http://www.visajobs.com>

Employment Weekly

<http://www.mediacorp2.com/index.html>

About Canada

<http://jobsearchcanada.about.com/index.htm>

Work Info Net

[http://www.workinfonet.ca/cwn/english/main\\_e.cfm](http://www.workinfonet.ca/cwn/english/main_e.cfm)

### Personnel firms

CEO Inc.

<http://www.seoemp.com>

Core Career Strategies Inc <http://corecareer.com>

Carion Resource Group Inc. <http://www.carionresource.com>  
Career Advancement <http://careeradvancement.on.ca>  
Robert W. Hart & Associates (relocation services for immigrants)  
<http://www.canadausemployment.com>

## **China**

### **Teaching in China**

*Jason Nicholls is an ALT who spent a year teaching English in China after he finished JET.*

As I drew to the end of my term on the JET Programme I found myself ready to leave Japan but not to leave Asia. Living in Japan had given me an appetite for teaching overseas as well as having exposed me to a culture and society that was significantly different to that of my native Britain and I found myself wanting more. However, no country in Asia aroused my curiosity as much as China.

There are many reasons for this not the least because so much that is interesting about Japan – e.g. Kanji, Buddhism, the martial arts, kimono, traditional architecture, the town planning of Kyoto etc., - derives from China. Therefore, one month after leaving Japan I found myself preparing, yet again, to head east.

As with Japan, I decided to come to China on an organised programme, the “Teach in China” Programme run by Council Exchanges. Council Exchanges head office is in New York although they have offices all over the world. British JETs will be familiar with this organisation since Council Exchanges, London organises the promotion and recruitment for the JET Programme in the UK. In fact, this was one of the reasons why I decided to choose this programme for China. Another reason was that Council Exchanges offered a 6-month or one year programme (most other programmes in China require a two year commitment).

After my years on JET, this suited my time schedule. Finally, the Council Exchanges Programme offered the chance to teach at either a college or university, which after my time spent at Japanese high schools, appealed to me as something new and different. As with JET, Council Exchanges organises both a pre-departure get together and a post arrival orientation (one week in Beijing). However, unlike JET, participants have to pay for administrative

expenses and a programme fee as well as half of their return airfare (affordable with a few JET savings!). I arrived, last September, at my posting: a teacher's college in Jiangsu Province close to both Nanjing (Nanking) and Shanghai.

In terms of work, my job here in China does slightly resemble my job on JET. My college – Nantong Teachers' College – is a public institution administered by the Jiangsu Education Commission in Nanjing (the provincial capital). I teach English to trainee junior and senior high school teachers.

I am also involved in research involving social and cultural studies in language education as well as extra-curricular activities with the students. I make fairly regular visits to local junior and senior high schools as well as to primary schools both to teach classes and to observe lessons. I have visited Nanjing University as well as doing some advisory work with the local Foreign Affairs Office, quite familiar terrain after JET and completely fascinating to compare and contrast the two systems.

As for the teaching itself, the skills I developed in Japan have served me well. I teach 16 periods per week, two of which are research lessons. However, one thing that really struck me on arriving in China was the ability of my students since they are noticeably better at speaking English than their Japanese cousins – even at comparable school grades. There are probably many reasons for this, too many to list here.

Nevertheless, on arriving in my classes to teach my first lesson I quickly realised that all of my students could speak English and that it was my role to facilitate their need to practice the language. Moreover, in my experience, Chinese students, although still rather shy, tend to be more responsive and open than their Japanese counterparts. This has led to some genuinely lively classroom discussions, debates and presentations and has added real colour to my life here. Certainly, one reason for the positive response from Chinese students may be that Western people are still something of

a novelty in China. Even compared with Japan, unless you are based in one of the big urban centres such as Shanghai or Beijing, you're going to stand out. This may lead to situations that I imagine were common for Western people in Japan a few years ago. For example, my local TV station recently televised me "in action" teaching a class during a visit to a local senior high school and I'm due to appear in nine episodes of a local TV series called "Kids' English"!! Moreover, my school visits are almost always rounded off with an enormous (and often delicious) Chinese banquet with the school principle and senior members of staff (not a bento box in sight)! Such is life in China, at least until the novelty wears thin.

As far as other aspects of life in China are concerned, I live on campus in a one bedroom flat and pay no rent or bills (aside from the telephone bill). I receive a salary comparable to that of a senior Chinese professor so I can live comfortably (although in order to travel around China I have had to dip into savings). Having said this, the salary is not fixed, as is the case on the JET Programme, but often negotiable. Bear this in mind before you sign anything! Regarding paid holidays, the Spring Festival break (to celebrate Chinese New Year), along with the one week holidays for May Day and China's National day allow enough time to travel extensively in and around the country. Superb!

As for life beneath the red flag... socially and economically, China does not feel very red anymore, at least in Eastern China. Change is everywhere. Capitalism is everywhere. New classes are emerging with new property and new interests. Building projects dominate the skylines of many towns and cities and Shanghai's new developments make Tokyo look positively '80s.

However, with the closing down of the old state owned industries, unemployment is also rising as the gap between China's richest and poorest and between the regions becomes ever wider. All these things bring new social tensions and new possibilities. Politically, China is changing very slowly indeed. A one party state accountable to no one but itself and still clinging on to the idea that

China is a socialist country with Chinese characteristics. It is an interesting mix and quite different to Japan. However, perhaps the most striking difference is the relationship between men and women. Chinese women seem to enjoy far more social and economic freedom compared with Japanese women. No doubt this can be attributed to the legacy of communism, with its emphasis on social equality, mixed with the competitive demands of the new economy in which everybody—men and women alike—must work to survive. Female JETs would, I am sure, especially notice this difference.

My year in China sits well on top of my JET experience. Moreover, my experience in China has, in fact, facilitated a richer understanding of Japan. If you are considering a year or two in China it is important to bear in mind that situations in China are more varied than in Japan. Living and working conditions can vary enormously depending on where you are placed. However, if you are flexible, a year in China after Japan is likely to be genuinely rewarding. It has been for me and I recommend it.

Council Exchanges enables graduates and teachers of any discipline to teach English at Chinese universities, colleges and schools. Placements are predominantly in the more developed eastern provinces of Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Shandong and Hubei. Groups depart for China twice a year, in February and August, for either 5 or 10-month contracts. Participants pay a programme fee; all receive accommodation, local salary, travel stipend, post-arrival orientation and emergency support while in China. There is no upper age limit and the programme is open to applicants of all nationalities. Orientation takes place in New York, London or Sydney.

The Teach in China department of Council Exchanges:  
<http://www.councilexchanges.org/work/ticfacts.htm>

## **China Teaching Program**

Western Washington University.

Old Main 530A Bellingham, WA 98225-9047 Tel: 360-650-3753

E-mail: [ctp@cc.wwu.edu](mailto:ctp@cc.wwu.edu) Catherine Barnhart, Director

This is a very reputable teaching program. Placement is open to all nationalities and includes positions for business and law related teaching positions. Candidates participate in a 5-week training course at WWU in July consisting of TEFL, Chinese language and culture. Course cost \$1,100. Catherine tells me that JET's may qualify for placement only. <http://www.ac.wwu.edu>

For a listing of other Teach in China programs see

<http://www.transitionsabroad.com/listings/work/articles/workjan1.shtml>

## **France**

Finding work in France is almost impossible without a good knowledge of French and the correct papers. This is mainly due to the opening of the European Community—making it easier for EC nationals to get work in other member countries.

### **Teaching English**

Subsidised training, particularly in English and computing, has assisted the growth of a new found interest in English these days. As a result, many of the opportunities for teaching are in technical and business English, and either on the work site or in specialist language schools. In some regions, the unemployed can take free English courses.

This has meant that TEFL qualifications, while preferred, are not as important as business experience or understanding. Freelancing is a common, if not stable, option. There are a number of places that offer, "Telephone teaching"—a trend that started with Parisian Yuppies in the late Eighties. Alternatively, room and board are provided with "live-in" jobs, (child-minding, teaching or English conversation in return)—a great chance to become fully immersed in the culture, if you get on well with the people around you.

As the UK is so close to France geographically, it is often the first

place would-be British teachers head. Therefore most adverts for vacancies will be carried in the French and UK press rather than North America. However, in many regions it is trendy to study American English—so those further away than the Channel Tunnel need not despair.

For everyone though, competition is tough, and most successful applicants are those who head over to France, CV in hand, and go knocking on doors. Go prepared to support yourself for some time.

### **Places to look**

Try your Embassy or Consulate, and their related trade associations. Consult the chambers of commerce for opportunities and advice on working in France. If you are interested in finding a Japan-related job in France, check out JETRO (Paris & Lyon). For information access the links at JETRO's main page, <http://www.jetro.go.jp/top/links/jetroweb.html>. The US Information Service provides information for American teachers at: 2 rue Saint-Florentin, 75001 Paris, Tel: (49) 96-12- 02 ext. 2163.

### **Publications**

UK national newspapers, especially *The Guardian*, often run ads for jobs throughout Europe, either in their European section, or Education Recruitment pages.

*Teaching English as a Foreign Language in France*, (The British Council): Paris and Lyons have English Teaching Resource Centres (ETRC), where you can find the handout as well as lists of language schools. The ETRCs are closed from mid July to early September.

The French Yellow Pages, Pages Jaunes, lists English schools under Enseignements Privé de Langues or Ecoles de Langues.

## **Germany**

Germany has one of strongest economies in Europe and therefore has some of the best pay and conditions in Europe (although disparities between east and west Germany still exist). There is, however, some negative feeling towards foreigners seeking jobs, as there is still significant unemployment and a high number of immigrants from Eastern Europe.

Germany prides itself on its reputation for technology, and as a consequence, most jobs are in the business world. There are also government programmes to sponsor training in business, of which English is a popular course. Some in-house positions exist within larger international companies, and also there are a number of agencies and consultancies to supply teachers to smaller businesses.

Germans take their work seriously therefore professional presentation is essential to find a good job. You are advised to apply in person to the company on speculation, with your CV/résumé and references.

#### **Places to find information**

Contact your Embassy or Consulate for details of companies with links to Germany, and other opportunities. If you are interested in finding a Japan-related job in Germany, JETRO has offices in Berlin, Frankfurt, Dusseldorf and Munchen.

<http://www.jetro.de/framepage-index-g.htm>

#### **Publications**

*Teaching in Germany*, (The German Embassy in London) recommends applying to the Zentralstelle für Arbeitsvermittlung (Central Placement Office of the Federal Department of Employment), Feuerbachstrasse 42, D-6000, Frankfurt am Main 1. They have a department to deal with applications from abroad.

*Working as a Teacher of English as a Foreign Language in Germany*. (The British Council): Available from Council offices in Berlin, Cologne, Hamburg, Munich and Leipzig—if not available to you directly, maybe one of your many British JET pals can get their hands on one for you.

### **Greece**

If you are not ready to settle down in the office, and fancy a little more fun in the sun, then working in Greece could be the next step. Greece has plenty to offer, from language teaching to tourism.

### **Teaching English**

Almost anyone can set up a private English School (*frontisteria*) in Greece, meaning size and quality can vary enormously. English education in state schools is poor. Though it is a compulsory subject, students cannot proceed to the next year unless they pass. Therefore, private English schools abound, as do teaching posts for native speakers (particularly on the mainland) supplementing state education. However this system does not create the most enthusiastic of students—although as JETs, many of us will have learned how to change/deal with this situation!

All but the shadiest schools will require seeing a university certificate, and although TEFL Certification is still not a pre-requisite in the majority of schools, it will open more doors. Despite the EC regulations, many schools are still willing to hire non-EC nationals, but these positions are becoming rare than in the past.

Finding a job in Greece is not that hard for those who meet the basic requirements, but the rewards are not as high as in many other countries. The cost of living is also low though, so a teacher's pay is usually enough on which to live happily. Start by picking a town and contacting all the local schools by using the phone book.

### **Tourism**

There are plenty of bars, restaurants and hotels across Greece, especially on the Islands and in Athens. The main tourist season is from May to September. These seasonal jobs will allow you to earn enough in the evenings to get by, and spend the day asleep on the beach. Beware of dodgy deals and be aware of the regulations.

Many tour companies also operate in Greece, especially package tour operators, although these are more for British, French and Germans abroad, and unlikely to use any Japanese skills, except perhaps in Athens. Most tour operators will recruit in their base country.

Though you may not be able to use your Japanese, use your time on JET to show your resilience, interest in other cultures, and ability to pick up languages on the hoof. Of course, your skill in interesting, controlling and entertaining groups of strangers is useful. First stop, go to a local travel agent and pick up brochures of companies operating in Greece.

## **Ireland**

The high-tech industry has really taken off in Ireland in recent years. Hopefully you can parlay your JET experience into an opportunity with a Japan-related company.

To work in Ireland a non-EEA national must have a valid work permit, which is usually issued to employers, so you need a job offer before you get a permit. These permits are very hard to come by, because of the high unemployment in Ireland. Applications are only considered if the employer can prove that there is no suitably qualified Irish or EEA national available for the post.

### **Places to look for information**

JETRO - Dublin1 Setanta Place, Dublin 2, Tel: (1) 671-4003  
E-mail: [jetro.dub@iol.ie](mailto:jetro.dub@iol.ie) Web page <http://www.jetro.go.jp>

Chambers of Commerce of Ireland - 22 Merrion Sq., Dublin 2  
Tel: (1) 661-2888 E-mail: [chambers@iol.ie](mailto:chambers@iol.ie)

Department of Foreign Affairs - 80 St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2  
Tel: (1) 478-0822 E-mail: [library1@iveagh.irlgov.ie](mailto:library1@iveagh.irlgov.ie)

Government Information Services - Upper Merrion St, Dublin 2  
Tel: (1) 662-4422

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment - Kildare St,  
Dublin 2 Tel: (1) 661-4444 web page: [http:// www.irlgov.ie/entemp](http://www.irlgov.ie/entemp)

Department of Education and Science - Marlborough Street, Dublin 1  
Tel: (1) 873-4700 E-mail [webmaster@educ.irlgov.ie](mailto:webmaster@educ.irlgov.ie)

Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation - Kildare St, Dublin 2  
Tel: (1) 662-1444 E-mail: [webmaster@emtemp.irlgov.ie](mailto:webmaster@emtemp.irlgov.ie)

You may also want to search for relevant information through the

Government Publications Mail Order Section, 4-5 Harcourt Rd,  
Dublin 2, Tel: (1) 661-3111, Fax: (1) 475-2760, E-mail:  
[opw@iol.ie](mailto:opw@iol.ie)

### **Student Exchange Programme**

There is a student exchange program between Ireland and Japan.

VULCANUS Programme DGIII A/2 European Commission  
Rue de la Loi 200 B-1049 Brussels, Belgium  
Tel: 32 (2) 296-5099 exchange 299 1111

### **Internet resources**

Irish Jobs Page	<a href="http://www.exp.ie">http://www.exp.ie</a>
Jobs in Ireland	<a href="http://www.topjobs.ie/">http://www.topjobs.ie/</a>
FAS	<a href="http://jobsireland.com/">http://jobsireland.com/</a>
Jobs-Ireland	<a href="http://www.jobs-ireland.com/">http://www.jobs-ireland.com/</a>
Irish Careers	<a href="http://www.irish-careers.com">http://www.irish-careers.com</a>
Work thing	<a href="http://www.workthing.com/index.xml">http://www.workthing.com/index.xml</a>

### **The Middle East**

After September 11<sup>th</sup>, this may be a risky region to work. But if you are feeling adventurous, the experience may be profitable.

<http://www.jobline.net> Excellent classified listings with work in many fields. Also a bevy of links and you can post your résumé online.

<http://www.arab.net> This site contains a Middle East Internet directory and links to newspapers as well as information sections for each Arab country.

<http://www.Amideast.org> This is a non-profit organisation working to strengthen mutual understanding between the United States and the Middle East and North Africa. Centres in many locations.

### **New Zealand**

For work visas, refer to the *Guide for Working in New Zealand*, available from the New Zealand Embassy. If interested in a working holiday visa, contact your Embassy to see if there is a short-term visa waiver agreement with New Zealand. Immigration information: <http://www.immigration.govt.nz>. With the growing number of Japanese travelling to New Zealand, there are opportunities in the

service sector—especially in tour guiding. Opportunities to teach Japanese are also growing in both public and private sectors.

Department of Labour Aurora House, 66 The Terrace, Box 3705,  
Wellington, NZ Tel: (04) 473-7800 Fax: (04) 471-0012

### **Business relations with Japan**

JETRO - Level 10 West Pac Tower 120 Albert St. PO Box 2123,  
Auckland, NZ Email: [jetro@iprolink.co.nz](mailto:jetro@iprolink.co.nz) Web page:  
<http://www/jetro.or.nz>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Private Bag 18-901 Wellington,  
New Zealand Tel: (04) 494-8500 Fax: (04) 472-9596

### **Cultural relations with Japan**

Japan Information and Cultural Centre - Podium 1, The Majestic  
Centre, 100 Willis Street, Wellington, NZ Tel: (04) 472-7807 Fax: (04)  
472-3416

## **Internet resources**

### **Job boards**

Jobs on line	<a href="http://www.jobs-on-line.co.nz">http://www.jobs-on-line.co.nz</a>
New Zealand jobs.	<a href="http://www.nzjobs.co.nz">http://www.nzjobs.co.nz</a>
Escape Artist	<a href="http://www.escapeartist.com/nzjobs/">http://www.escapeartist.com/nzjobs/</a>

### **Volunteer opportunities**

Volunteer Organisation	<a href="http://www.volunteers.org.nz">http://www.volunteers.org.nz</a>
Travel Alternatives	<a href="http://www.travelalternatives.org">http://www.travelalternatives.org</a>

## **Portugal**

For details of Portugal-related opportunities, the Embassy suggests you contact the following:

Camara de Comercio e Industrias Luso-Japonesa (Chamber of  
Commerce Portugal/Japan) R. Arfilaria 1-104,5'.E, 1070 Lisboa,  
Portugal  
Tel: (01) 388-9632/388 8817 Fax: (01) 385-7832

Japan Portugal Business Forum c/o Mr Mamoru Itoh, General  
Secretary, Mitsui & Co Ltd. Overseas Co-ordination & Administration

Dept. Corporate Planning Division 2-1 Ohtemachi 1 chome,  
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-91 Tel: (03) 3285-7538 Fax: (03) 3285-9552

For teaching opportunities in Japan and scholarships, consult the  
website. <http://www.pnsnet.co.jp/users/cltembpt>

## **Poland**

### **English teaching**

The Uniwersytet Warszawski recruits qualified English teachers for teaching positions in Poland. Participants must have at least a Master's degree and one year experience in TEFL. There is a one-year minimum contract. A small salary and health care assistance are provided.

Uniwersytet Warszawski Wydział Lingwistyki Stosowanej, Filologii Wschodniosłowiańskich, 00-311 Warszawa, Browarna 8/10, Polska,  
Tel/Fax: 48 (22) 826-1391

## **United Kingdom**

Employment in the UK has recently had its ups and downs. The debate over a single European currency and single job community has not made things easy. Being well qualified and well prepared can only help. There are plenty of opportunities for those wanting to use their Japanese in major tourist traps, such as London's main shopping areas and sights, Windsor and Stratford, but competition is getting tougher.

### **UK - Japan relations**

Many Japanese firms are operating in Britain, and many British companies have offices or installations in Japan.

JETRO (\*Business library by appointment only) Leconfield House, Curzon St. London W1J 5HZ, Tel: 020-7470-4700  
<http://www.jetro.co.uk>

### **Publications**

*Membership List*: (The British Chamber of Commerce in Japan, BCCJ): ¥5000

*Japanese Addresses in the UK*. (Insight Japan, in association with the Anglo-Japanese Economic Institute): A list of 1,100 Japanese companies and Japan-related organisations. Apparently, it is the most up-to-date listing of its kind and a must for all Japanophiles. £20 (plus £2.50 airmail postage) Insight Japan c/o 6 Hugh St., Pimlico, London SW1V 1RP Tel: (0207) 821-7980 E-mail: [ajei@dial.pipex.com](mailto:ajei@dial.pipex.com)

*The Directory of British Businesses in Japan* An annual publication containing in-depth information on UK business activities in Japan, £25. P&B International, 104 Gowan Ave, London SW6 6RG. In Japan,

Tel: (03) 3589-3299.

### **Personnel Agencies**

Cannon Persona, 75 Cannon Street, London, EC4N 5BN

Tel: (0207) 489-8141, E-mail: [info@cpir.com](mailto:info@cpir.com) <http://www.cpir.com>

Centre People, 1-6 Lombard St, London, EC3V 9JT, Tel: (0207) 929-5551, <http://www.centrepeople.com>

JAC Recruitment, Dauntsey House, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Fredericks Place, Old Jewry, London EC3R 8AB Tel: (0207) 796-3132, <http://www.jac-recruitment.co.uk>

Gabbitas Educational Consultants, (Private Education, British and international schools) 126-130 Regent St, London W1R 6EE2, Tel: (0207) 734-0161, Web page: <http://www.gabbitas.co.uk>

People FIRST (Japanese sector), 46 Moorgat, London EC2R 6EH Tel (0207)- 256 9050 Web page: <http://www.people-first.demon.co.uk>

### **The diplomatic service**

Within the British diplomatic service two career paths are possible: the Policy Entry Point (Fast Stream) and the Operational Entry Point (Main Stream). Policy entrants create policy, while the operational side does the practical work, which implements that policy. The Policy Entry Point is reported to be more intellectually demanding.

The minimum academic qualification for the Policy entrant is a second class honours degree in any discipline. The Operational Entry Point has no minimum academic qualification; weight is given instead to previous work experience. Knowledge of a foreign language is not required for either.

Entry for both points is decided by open competition. The Policy Entry Point competitions are held every autumn. The Operational Entry Point competitions are held in January or February. The selection process is rigorous, and lengthy because of the number of applicants, taking up to a year between application and appointment. There are three stages:

1. Qualifying test: Verbal usage and general reasoning.

2. Two-day selection board in London. In addition to further verbal usage and general reasoning tests, you will be asked to analyse a typical problem of the sort you might encounter as a civil servant, and recommend a course of action. There are also group exercises to test your interpersonal, leadership and negotiating skills, and a series of interviews to explore background, intellect and motivation.
3. Final selection board. A 35-minute interview carried out by a board of five to seven members. Application forms can be obtained in August.

Recruitment and Assessment Services,  
Alencon Link, Basingstoke, Hants RG21 7JB Tel: (0125) 86-9555.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
London SW1A 2AH Tel: (0207) 238-4265, 6, 7, 8, and 9  
E-mail: [pmd.fco@gtnet.gov.uk](mailto:pmd.fco@gtnet.gov.uk) web page: <http://www.fco.gov.uk>

## **Internet Resources**

### **Japan related**

Japan 2001 <http://www.japan2001.org.uk>  
Information and Cultural Centre  
<http://www.embjapan.org.uk/japan>  
Japan Foundation Nihongo Centre  
<http://www.nihongocentre.org.uk>  
The Japan Society <http://www.japansociety.org.uk>  
Daiwa Foundation  
<http://www.daiwa-foundation.org.uk>

### **Volunteer opportunities**

Do It Organisation <http://www.doit.org.uk>  
Comm' Service Volunteers <http://www.csv.org.uk>  
Volunteer Week <http://www.volunteersweek.org.uk>

### **Employment related**

CV Services <http://www.cvservices.net>  
Job Pilot <http://www.jobpilot.co.uk>  
Top Jobs (tech jobs) <http://www.topjobs.co.uk>  
Job search <http://www.jobsearch.co.uk>  
The Guardian Online <http://www.guardian.co.uk>  
The Times: <http://www.the-times.co.uk>  
Step Stone <http://www.jobfinder.ie>

British magazines <http://www.britishmagazines.com>  
Interview Tips  
<http://www.moates.co.uk/interview.htm>  
EMDS (IT)  
<http://www.emdsnet.com/jobs/index.cfm>

## **United States of America**

JET is not very well known in America. If you have not been doing it already, start writing down your experiences—from supervising an area of school during cleaning time, to home-stays, martial arts classes, etc. Take advantage of the extracurricular activities possible on JET to build your skills. And before you leave, gather recommendation letters. These can be from anybody, your principal, the mayor, the head of the board of education, etc. The more you have, the better.

### **Business relations with Japan**

JETRO: Atlanta, Chicago, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco. JETRO publishes *The Directory of Japanese Affiliated Companies in the USA and Canada*.  
<http://www.jetro.go.jp/top/links/jetroweb.html>

### **Publications**

*On The Record*. (The U.S-Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange): A Media directory of Japan specialists in the US. You can contact CULCON care of the Japan-US Friendship Commission.

*The Survey Reports on Japan-Related Regional Activities in the US*. (The Japan Foundation: Centre for Global Partnership)

*Japan Insider*. (Japanese Language Services): A newsletter that covers language, trade and cultural issues.

One Kendall Square, Bldg. 200, Cambridge, MA 02139,

Tel: (617) 577-8000, E-mail: [info@japanese.co.jp](mailto:info@japanese.co.jp)

*American Firms, Subsidiaries and Affiliates – Japan* (Commercial Intelligence Division, Bureau of International Commerce): Includes the US and Japanese addresses of American Companies operating in Japan. United States Department of Commerce, Washington DC 20230, USA

### **Teaching opportunities**

For teaching opportunities within the US, contact the Department of State. Although the Department does not employ teachers for assignment abroad, they publish a list of organisations that do recruit a large number of teachers at the elementary and secondary school level.

There are a large number of independent, non-government, American-sponsored, overseas schools, which often look to recruit staff from the US. Many of them contract with private organisations in the US to help them recruit, or send representatives to US recruitment fairs.

[http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/schools/oteachblurb.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/schools/oteachblurb.html)

Other opportunities exist within the Department of Defense school system (schools for dependants of US military personnel stationed overseas). Contact the Department of Defence Educational Activity Office for recruitment information.

### **Internet resources**

#### **Employment**

USA jobs <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>  
American job bank <http://www.ajb.dni.us>  
Cognetics, Inc. <http://www.cogonline.com>  
First Gov for Workers <http://www.workers.gov>  
Challengers USA Guide <http://www.challengeusa.com>  
State Agencies <http://www.state.az.us/employment.html>  
Fortune <http://www.fortune.com/lists/bestcompanies>  
American Immigration  
<http://www.us-immigration.com/employment>  
WebEx  
[http://www.webex.com/home/about\\_employment.html](http://www.webex.com/home/about_employment.html)  
New York Times  
<http://www.nytimes.com/library/financial/01working-index.html>

#### **Personnel Agencies**

Spherion <http://www.spherion.com>

CEO Inc. <http://www.ceomp.com>  
USA Employment Services  
<http://www.canadauseemployment.com>  
Management Recruiters International  
<http://www.brilliantpeople.com>  
Advanced Internet Recruitment Strategies  
<http://www.airsdirectory.com>