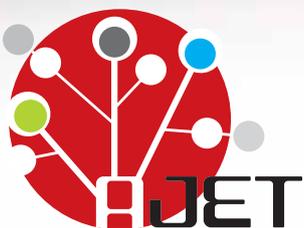


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2013 After JET Conference

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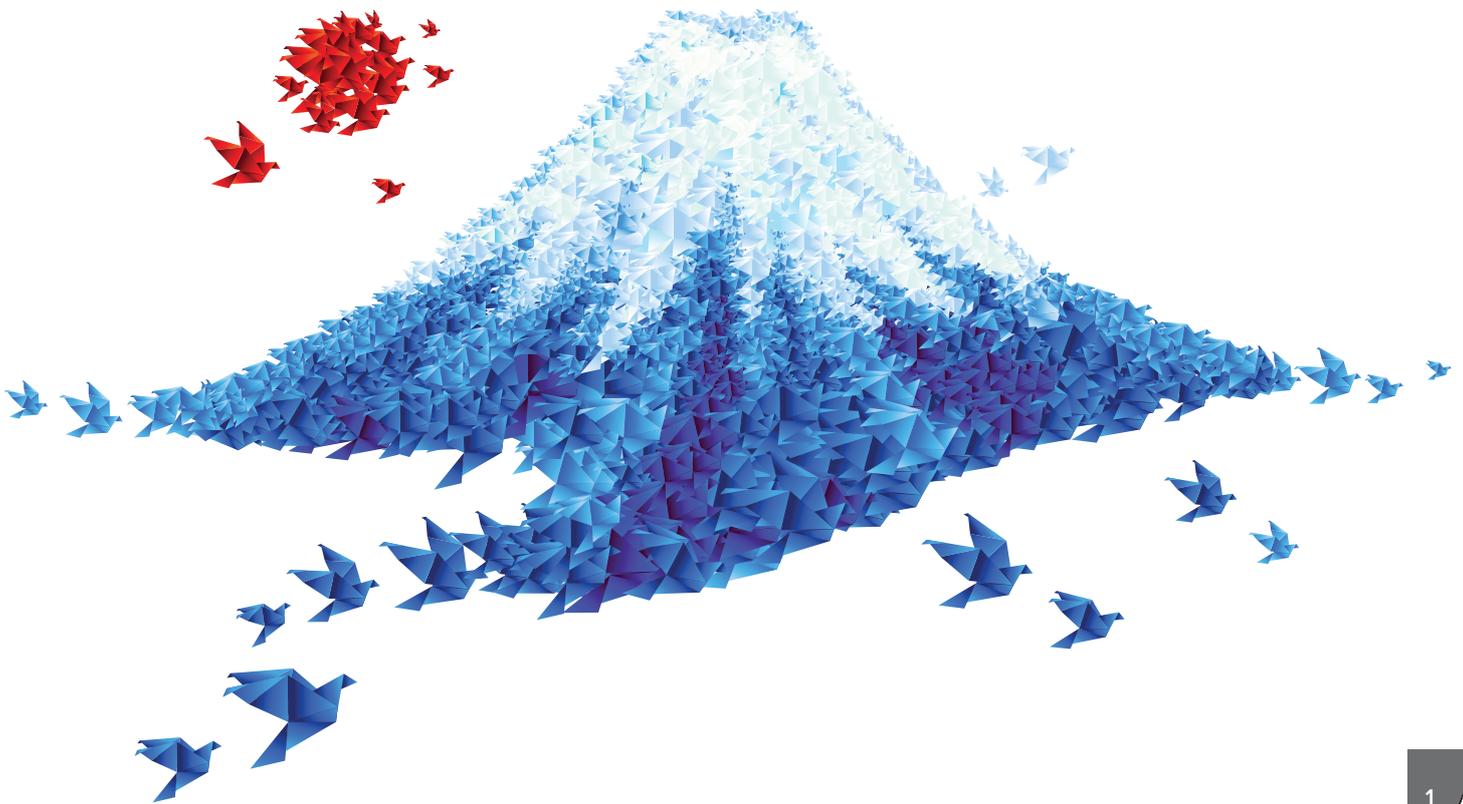
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Welcome to our special After JET edition of Connect Magazine! So, that's it: the papers are signed; your time on JET is over. But now what? It's a big world out there, and we've all got to face it sooner or later. The good news is, the sand hasn't quite run out of our Japanese hourglass yet—we've still got five months, at *least*. And there's no such thing as *over*-prepared, right? So, as you think about your next step, sit back,

relax and peruse this special selection of articles we've tailored just for you: the guys and girls who were never too busy for a last-minute work *enkai*, who've stomached more "what *is* this?" moments at school lunch than they thought possible, and who, after all the moaning and whining, are actually going to miss this crazy, amazing little place. Wherever you head next, it's been a pleasure serving as your Connect Editor. And don't forget, even if you're gone, we're not! If you ever have a craving for a slice of nostalgia, we're only ever a click away at <http://ajet.net/ajet-connect/>.

Good luck out there!

Jim

Jim
james.kemp@ajet.net



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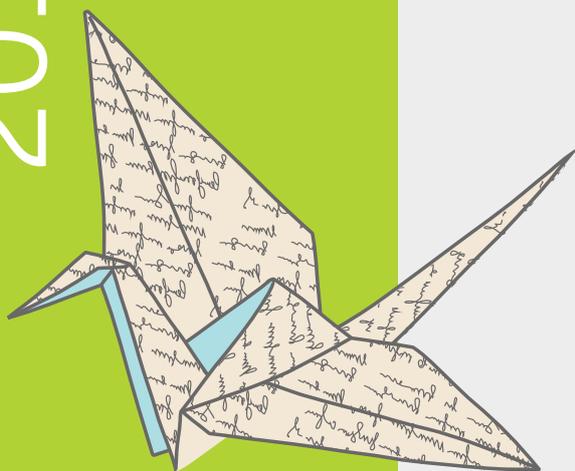
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2013 After JET Conference

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Letter from the Editor	1
Five Years On While you've been here in Japan, don't doubt that the rest of the world has carried on spinning, for good and for worse. Whether you're returning home after one year or five, a lot has been happening out there – read on for your Connect team's roundup of the biggest news stories from the past five years.	4
Take Two: Returning to JET Back in 2005, Raygan Solotki hung up her JET boots and returned to Canada. Eight years later, she's a JET once more. We caught up with Raygan to get the lowdown on why she decided to come back to Japan, how she went about preparing herself for her return and what it's like living in Japan as a second-time JET.	5
Life after JET: How China Can Help You Polish up Your Skills Set However long you've been a JET, your experiences here in Japan have internationalized you in ways you probably don't even realise. Why not put that international experience to good use with some work experience in China? CRCC Asia are experts in helping JETs find work, offering short-term internships in a number of industries. Interested? Read on for more information.	12
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Reverse Culture Shock? Paula Kerrigan Any homecoming should be a happy event. In reality, it's not always sunshine and rainbows. Reverse culture shock is a real phenomenon and it could happen to you. Ex-JET Paula Kerrigan talks about her experiences readjusting to life in Ireland and suggests ways you can avoid the phantom menace.	26
Ask the Alumni Whatever situation we've found ourselves in as JETs in Japan, there's no denying a little help from a seasoned senpai goes a long way. With that in mind, we've rallied together some ex-JET pros to ask them the truth about returning home: how they overcame culture shock, brushed up their CVs and found work elsewhere in Japan. Read on for the lowdown.	30

Contributors

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This edition, and all past editions of AJET Connect, can also be found online at <http://ajet.net/ajet-connect/>.
<http://ajet.net/ajet-connect/>で今回と過去の、AJETコネクットの雑誌が見れます。

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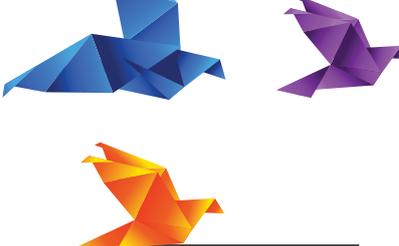
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5 YEARS ON...

So you've been gone for at least a year now (or, if you're a unicorn, five!). Looking back, it can be easy to lose perspective... so, allow us to keep you in check with a roundup of some of the biggest news stories and trends of the past five years, compiled for you by your trusty Connect team!

BARACK OBAMA

Amelia Hagen

Barack Obama has had a rollercoaster four and a half years in the global limelight. After being elected in November 2008, he was inaugurated as the first African American US President in January 2009, just as an economic crisis was kicking into high gear. While improving the US's image abroad, Obama revived the US auto industry, eliminated Osama Bin Laden, ended the war in Iraq, and began the US drawdown of war in Afghanistan. In his spare time, he passed Obamacare (the Affordable Care Act) and announced his support of same-sex marriage. In November 2012, Obama was re-elected President after a fierce campaign with Republican candidate Mitt Romney. Oh yeah, and he won the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize. Obama listens to Jay-Z and Young Jeezy—could he be America's hippest President yet?

MEME AND FADS

Ariane Bobiash

The explosion of social media in the past five years facilitated the speedy sharing of memes, videos, and Internet fads of various kinds. People were united by enjoying the same Lonely Island music video and by their bewilderment of Rebecca Black's 'Friday.' Gangnam Style brought catchy K-Pop to mainstream audiences, becoming the most viewed Youtube video ever and prompting hundreds of parodies. We've also discovered the hilarity of a simple captioned image in the form of a "meme". A few noteworthy memes include Angelina's Leg, Ridiculously Photogenic Guy, and High Expectations Asian Father. If unfamiliar with these references, I am Not Impressed.

RECESSION

Aaron Ayling

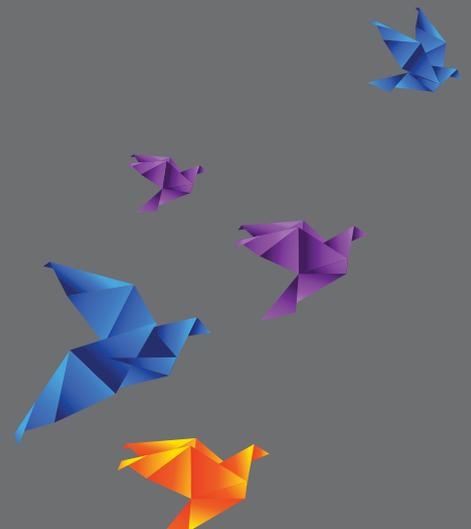
In case you've been living under a rock for the past five years (a situation many JETs will sympathise with) there's been a bit of a recession. Actually, quite a big recession, as banks worldwide learnt the hard way that you don't give mortgages to people who can't pay them back... and then wonder why you don't have any money left. The more unfortunate banks collapsed, whilst others were bailed out by national governments. Amidst all the gloom, however, there was a nugget of good news for western JETs: as a result of the financial markets getting themselves into such a tizzy, our salaries effectively doubled. And who says irresponsibility doesn't pay?



THE ROYAL WEDDING

Annabella Massey

In April 2011, Britons strung up miles of bunting, flocked to the streets en masse, and became uncharacteristically patriotic when 2.4 billion viewers around the world witnessed the union of Kate Middleton and Prince William at Westminster Abbey. Despite the state pomp and pageantry, this wedding signaled that the British royalty had finally entered a new and more modern era. Memorable highlights included Kate Middleton's dress (designed by the supremely talented Sarah Burton of Alexander McQueen), Princess Beatrice's somewhat questionable hat, and of course, Pippa Middleton's derriere making its debut down the aisle and the national ogling session which followed immediately after.





FELIX BAUMGARTNER'S SPACE JUMP

Ruth Rowntree

Baumgartner. Quite a long surname, isn't it? However, you may recall that Felix Baumgartner is all about taking the long route! On 14th October 2012, this Austrian skydiver-daredevil, perched 24 miles up in the stratosphere for the Red Bull Stratos space diving project, set off for a 4 minute and 19 second free-fall towards the earth before parachuting safely into New Mexico. He set three world records: for the highest manned balloon flight of 37,640m, reaching an estimated speed of 834 mph and becoming the first person to break the sound barrier without vehicular power on his descent. Red Bull really does give you wings, eh!

SOCIAL MEDIA

Chris Barstow

Whether you're wittily condensing your musings into 140 characters on Twitter, checking out your mate's girlfriend's brother's band on MySpace or ogling home-made cupcakes on Pinterest, it has been hard to escape the rise of social media over the past five years. The behemoth Facebook has alone racked up a staggering one billion users, liking and poking each other despite controversies over advertising and privacy. So, is social media the scourge of modern society, rendering us into narcissistic automatons, greedy for validation and obsessed with triviality? I'll get back to you once I've found out what Justin Bieber's had for breakfast...

NATURAL DISASTERS

Annabella Massey

Over the past five years, a number of devastating large-scale natural disasters have struck all corners of the earth and traumatised the global population: the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami (2011), the Haiti earthquake (2010), Cyclone Nargis (2008), the Sichuan earthquake (2008) and Hurricane Sandy (2012), to name just a few. The affected regions are still in the slow process of recovery and the level of human cost has been tragically high, yet in the midst of every trauma, remarkable acts of human resilience and kindness have emerged and resounded across the world.



SPORTING LANDMARKS: OLYMPICS, FIFA WORLD CUP 2010

Ruth Rowntree

For many, our time in Japan almost seems book-ended by major sporting events. When I, like many other unicorns, first arrived, the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics were in full swing, and last summer the London Olympics took center stage. Between Olympic exploits and the 2010 Fifa World Cup in South Africa far more countrymen have had their hearts in their mouths these past five years than athletes have their hands on the prize! Oh how patriotic pride swells with a win; and deflates with a defeat. Japan's bid for the next Olympics didn't run, though no doubt Brazil will wow global audiences with their dual duties in both 2014 and 2016!

BRING ON THE CIVIL RESISTANCE!

Neetha Mony

Over the past five years, it seems there's been something in the air. People everywhere have decided to stop letting those in power do whatever they want. The ongoing Arab Spring, which began in 2010, is perhaps the most notable example, representing a series of civil uprisings and protests in Arab nations, some of which even ousted their leaders (Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, and Yemen!) England had its share of uprisings in 2010, too, with student protests against education budget cuts; and in 2011 when a fatal shooting by police sparked riots nationwide. The international Occupy movement saw people worldwide take to the streets in protest of economic inequality. Through social media, these uprisings gained more movement and attention than in the past. In related news, 2011 wasn't a great year for bin Laden, Gaddafi, or Kim Jong-il, either, with all three bidding their last.

GOODBYES

Xan Wetherall

Every year we say goodbye to many people in our lives—some temporarily, and some, forever. As you say your final farewells to your Japan family, we take the time to look back on the passing of figures both famous and infamous from the last five years. Michael Jackson, Amy Winehouse, Heath Ledger, Walter Cronkite, Steve Jobs, Neil Armstrong, Whitney Houston, and Elizabeth Taylor, to name a few, shocked the world with their untimely passing. On the other hand, Gaddafi's and Bin Laden's deaths provoked more than a few controversies. Will you remember them all after another five years?

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- Acting as project manager for Microsoft's Japanese localization team.
- Lecturing as a visiting scholar at Waseda University.
- Acting as an emissions broker at the Global Carbon Markets Group.
- Developing marketing plans for American Express, Japan.
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TAKE TWO!

RETURNING TO JET



Right now, you've made your decision. The papers are signed and you're heading home. For some, it's a natural conclusion to five years as a JET, for others, it's just time to move on. Whichever your situation, three years from now, you'll be eligible to reapply for JET. We spoke to one second-time JET, Raygan Solotki, about her decision to do so, and just how different her experience was the second time around.

So, please give me some information about your time on JET: as a first-time JET, where were you placed and when? And, as a current, second-time JET, where are you now placed and how long have you been there?

For my first time on JET, I was located in Gunma Prefecture, in the small city of Annaka (population 60,000). I was a Junior High School ALT for three years from 2002-2005. Annaka is conveniently located about two hours from Tokyo by train. Now, I am located in Gifu, in the village of Neo (population 1500). I am currently in the midst of my third year here and I am classified as an "Elementary ALT". Neo is 'conveniently' located a 35 minute drive from the closest combini, and over an hour to the closest JR station.

What was it like returning home after your first time on JET?

It was great. And terrible. I loved that I understood everything around me and had no trouble expressing my needs. However, I found some things in Canada—like how expensive everything was and how inconvenient transit was—to be really annoying. Losing my superstar status wasn't easy, either. In Annaka I had over 3000 students who would often stop me on the street and ask me to sign something. In Vancouver, nobody cared who I was... plus, my friends' lives had all moved on. After my welcome back party, no one seemed to care that I had been in Japan, and it was really hard to get back into the right groove with people. My parents were horrified at the speed—which I slurped up my food.

Why did you decide to give JET another go?

I love travelling. In the time between my JET contracts, I managed to live in Canada, England and Honduras. I am not interested in a big career, buying a house, or having kids. However, being home and seeing my friends doing all those things made me think that that was what I should want, too. In early 2010, I was involved in a few recruitment seminars for JET. Since it had been five years since I had left my first JET placement, and I wasn't crazy about the administrative job that I was working at, I decided I would give it a try. What's more, my partner and I had accumulated a bit of debt, and thought that returning to JET might be a good way to not only travel but also to pay off some of our debt.

...are you happy with your decision?

Today, yes... some days, no. Originally when I had started thinking about coming back on JET, I had gotten in contact with my old BOE and they had suggested that I try and come back to Annaka. So, I requested three places: Annaka, another placement in Gunma, and finally somewhere coastal. Somehow we got land-locked Gifu, deep in the mountains. To say we were disappointed was an understatement, but we decided to give it a try anyway. Coming on JET just out of university, as a 23 year old single woman is one thing... coming back at 32 with a husband in tow, and a lot more life experience, made this a very new Japan to me. Sitting through Tokyo Orientation was tough, after having presented at it in years past. There was certainly a bit of a chip on my shoulder when I arrived to Gifu.

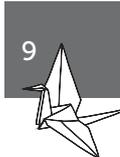
Just how had Japan changed in your time away?

In terms of the country itself, not a lot had changed. Which made it even stranger. Everything cost the same, people still had the same aversion to foreigners in the



THE RULE:

Former JET participants can re-apply but only if they have not participated in the JET Programme in the last three years.



countryside, or fear of speaking English. No one speaks English in my BOE or schools, still. No advancements in heating/cooling, that is for sure. When I returned to Canada it seemed that people and places were very different, even in just three years. What had changed in Japan was me.

How exactly have you struggled to find your place in the JET community? Do you feel it is more difficult to integrate as a returnee?

When I was 23 and willing to sleep on anyone's floor on the weekend, I felt a lot more integrated into the local JET community. I also didn't understand Japanese, so found it easy to be oblivious to what was being said about me in my schools. Now, I understand more clearly when I am being excluded from things, or not being taken seriously by my Japanese coworkers. From the JET community side, as a married JET in her 30s, I find some young ALTs treat me like I am their mom. As new ALTs came in, and I was more established, this became a lot easier to avoid from the beginning.

What advice would you give to JETs who are planning on not recontracting next year?

First of all, enjoy the time you have left in Japan. Save some free weekends—don't over-plan and then feel overwhelmed when you leave. Second, start preparing for the next step. Save some money, and make sure you have enough to not only pay a deposit on a place to live, but also a few months' worth of rent, basic bills, food, etc. Have resumes ready. I highly recommend registering with a temp agency as soon as you get back to your home country. If you are thinking about going back to school, see if there are online courses you can take to prepare yourself. If education is your chosen field, start accumulating a 'portfolio' of sorts—lesson plans, activities, etc. Put your materials on a flash drive so that if you take a similar job in the future you will have them all available to you.

And to those JETs who are considering a possible return to the JET program in the future, what would your advice be?

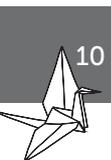
Really consider why you are coming back. Talk to old friends from your first time on JET. Not just about the fun times, but about the tough times, too. When I arrived back in Tokyo, I had lunch with a friend who had actually lived in Japan all the time I had been away. She said to me, "I am so surprised you are back, you had such a hard time before." I had completely forgotten all the issues I had had. I had only remembered the fun weekends in Tokyo, the snowboarding and the travelling. I had forgotten all the hours sitting at my desk pretending to look busy, and the summers sitting in the BOE doing nothing. Make yourself a big list of pros and cons and really consider what you are gaining and what you are leaving behind. Set goals. Will going back on JET help you attain those goals? Are you quitting a good job? Have you looked into similar opportunities in new countries?

How did your interview as a returnee differ from your initial interview when you first applied to be a JET? Did you feel at a disadvantage compared to first-time applicants?

As I had become active in JETAA, and with the Vancouver Embassy in regards to presenting at JET seminars, I was actually an ideal candidate for returning, as this showed I was committed to making the "E" in "JET" about real "Exchange". My interview was very different, as and I had actually met most of the interviewers before. To be honest, I left my interview not wondering if I had made it, but whether my placement would be honored. On the whole, my interviewers were very positive about my returning, and the Vancouver office was very excited I had decided to reapply for JET. I have remained in touch with them to this day.

For anyone considering coming back, I recommend you get involved at a local level with JETAA as soon as you return. Keep in touch with your local embassy, and involve yourself with promoting Japan at a local level.

Thanks for all the great advice and best of luck in the future!



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LIFE AFTER JET:

HOW CHINA CAN HELP YOU POLISH UP YOUR SKILLS SET

Lujika Bankson

As you approach the bittersweet end of your time on the JET Programme, you're bound to be hit with that anxiety-filled question, "What am I going to do next?"

You've just had an unforgettable and life changing experience that has likely opened your eyes and to a world of new possibilities. For many of you, the challenge of living in Asia is not something you're ready to leave behind completely. For others, you had a great time, but are ready to pack up your new experiences and take them back home with you. One thing most of you probably share in common is the uneasiness about dusting off that resume and hitting the job market again. You've had an incredible experience as an ALT, CIR or SEA, but you could use a refresher on the Finance, Engineering or other degree-related skills that have been put on hold for a while.

Fortunately JET has dozens of partnerships with universities and various career-building programs around the world to encourage and assist graduating JETs in the next step of their careers. You have this newfound cultural understanding and appreciation for Japan and a great opportunity to further your Asian experience with JET partner CRCC Asia in China.

Why Consider China?

China is booming with internship and job opportunities for foreigners. Both international and Chinese companies are constantly seeking fresh, innovative perspectives for their businesses. Employees with a global mindset can offer exactly that. With experience from their home countries, as well as time spent living and working in Japan, JET graduates are the ideal global thinkers.

The depth of these opportunities in China is more than most can find in their home countries. Interns are given real responsibility in contributing ideas and implementing them, rather than the stereotypical role of fetching coffees and filing papers. Entry level employees in China are shocked to find how quickly they're asked to manage people and given free rein to make decisions that affect bottom lines. For some it's daunting, but for most it's an invigorating and inspiring challenge.

China provides a fast-paced learning environment for foreigners to hone skills and discover new ones. You can almost feel the buzz in the air knowing that you're a part of something big. All eyes are on China and what's going to happen next.

How to Get into China

There are many different ways for finding your path into China and it all depends on what you're looking for. Perhaps your JET experience unveiled a passion for teaching, but you're ready for a new environment and challenge. China is a great place for expanding your teaching experience with hundreds of international schools and language centers in every major city. An increasing number are realizing that learning Mandarin Chinese is an essential skill for doing business in today's world and will come to China to enroll in courses. By choosing to study in China, the world becomes a live classroom and everywhere you go you can practice your language skills.

Another pathway is to find work opportunities in the form of an internship or job. This pathway is a little more challenging, but not impossible! A great resource is to connect with the Chambers of Commerce located in China – BritCham (British), AustCham (Australia), AmCham (America) and CanCham (Canada) to name a few. You can get in touch with them about available opportunities and sign up for their weekly newsletters which often list new jobs.

A more adventurous approach is to take the leap of faith and move to China without a plan. It might sound crazy, but the best way to find a job is to start networking your way around. Shanghai and Beijing are crawling with opportunities to meet with other working professionals. Every day of the week you can find an event to attend where you'll meet dozens of people and leave with a pocket full of business cards and a sore throat from talking.





There is something special about expatriate communities in Asia. There's a silent understanding that we're all a little out of our element choosing to live on this side of the world. This tends to lead to an unusual desire to help each other out. You'll quickly find people who hardly know you will want to introduce you to Joe Smith who knows Jane Doe and can help you find that marketing position you're searching for. It's a refreshing experience for those from competitive job markets like the US and UK.

For those wanting a little more structured China experience, there are fantastic programs that will find a placement for you, get you the proper visa, provide comfortable housing and many other forms of support. CRCC Asia is one of those companies offering internship opportunities, Mandarin language courses, Chinese business and finance courses and more.



China Internship Program in Beijing or Shanghai

JET has partnered with CRCC Asia to provide graduating JETs a unique opportunity to participate in a short term internship in the vital and ever-growing Chinese economy. Participants can choose from a wide range of industries where they will gain valuable hands-on work experience with an international or local Chinese firm. Internship placements range from Business-related fields such as Accounting, Finance and Marketing to Engineering, NGOs, Green Technology and many more. Chinese language skills are not a requirement as all internship placements are in an English-speaking environment.

With the option of a one-three month internship placement, CRCC Asia offers a great short term program to polish off your skill set in an industry of your choice while gaining an invaluable cultural understanding of one of the most important growing economies in the world. The combination of having work experience in both Japan and China makes for a unique and valuable resume that will showcase a highly sought after skill by today's employers: an ability and ambition to understand and adapt to different cultures and new environments. Additionally, about 30% of interns on the program end up receiving full time job offers, so it also serves as a great way of finding work in China.

No matter where the next chapter of your life takes you, your JET experience will influence it in a positive way that you probably won't even be able to notice. Your time in Japan has likely given you a more international perspective on life and a more adventurous spirit. Embrace that new understanding and excitement and you are bound to find success in your next endeavors!





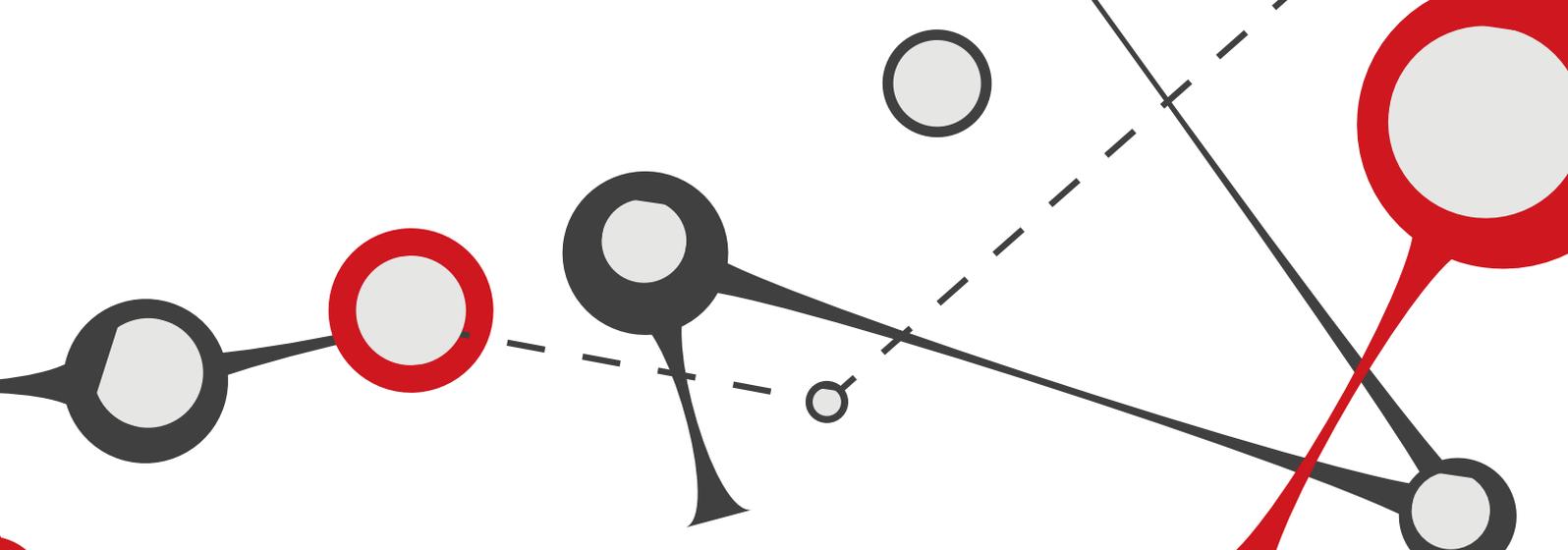
FIND YOUR STAY CONNECTED WITH JETAA: LOCAL CHAPTER!

14

The JET Programme Alumni Association (JETAA) is an Alumni Association created in 1989 to strengthen and maintain the bonds of friendship developed between JET Programme participants. The purpose of JETAA is to promote a broader and deeper understanding between Japan and the countries participating on the JET Programme through the hosting of national activities. The JET Alumni Association has 53,000 alumni from the 20 years for the Programme. Nearly 23,000 alumni are now registered to the some 52 regional Chapters located across 17 countries, making JETAA one of the largest growing alumni associations in the world.

JETAA Chapters play an important role in the promotion of Japan in their region in the form of social events related to Japan, orientations for new participants of the JET Programme, support for newly returning JETs and promotion of Japan and the JET Programme in their local communities.

To give you a helping hand, we've compiled a list of the current JETAA chapters and (where available) given you each chapter's website address so you can make sure you stay connected!



JETAA USA

- Rocky Mountains <http://rmjetalumni.org/main/>
- Seattle <http://www.pnwjetaa.org/>
- Portland <http://www.jetaaportland.com/>
- San Francisco <http://www.jetaanc.org/>
- Los Angeles <http://www.jetaasc.org/>
- Phoenix
- Honolulu <http://jetaahawaii.org/>
- Anchorage
- Great Lakes
- Minnesota <http://minnesota.jetalumni.org/>

JETAA Canada

- Ottawa <http://jetaaottawa.ca/>
- Toronto <http://www.jetaatoronto.ca/>
- Montreal
- Manitoba/Saskatchewan
- Northern Alberta <http://www.jetaana.ca/>
- British Columbia <http://www.jetaabc.ca/>
- Southern Alberta

JETAA UK

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- Midlands <http://www.jetaa.org.uk/>
- North West England <http://www.jetaa.org.uk/>
- Wales <http://www.jetaa.org.uk/>
- Northern Ireland <http://www.jetaa.org.uk/>
- Scotland <http://www.jetaa.org.uk/>
- Ireland/Dublin <http://ijetaa.org/>

JETAA Europe

- Paris/France <http://jetaafrance.typepad.com/jetaa/>
- Berlin/Germany <http://www.germany.jetalumni.org/en>

JETAA Australia

- Sydney <http://www.sydneyjetaa.org/>
- Victoria/Tasmania/South Australia <http://www.victassa.jetaa.org.au/>
- Western Australia <http://jetaawa.com/>
- Canberra <http://jetaacanberra.wordpress.com/>
- Queensland <http://www.jetaaqld.org/>

JETAA New Zealand

- Wellington <http://www.jetaawgtn.org.nz/>
- Auckland <http://aucklandjetaa.org/>
- Christchurch <http://jetaasouthisland.wordpress.com/>

Other chapters

- Jamaica
- China
- Japan East <http://www.jetaa.com/>
- Tokyo <http://www.jetaa-tokyo.org/>
- South Korea
- Brazil
- Russia
- Japan West
- Singapore <http://jetaasg.wordpress.com/>
- South Africa

While you're at it, you can also check out the JETAA Journal online at <http://paper.li/jetaai/1307949024>, and flip on over to the next page for our JETAA Focus, spotlighting the activities of JETAA's Toronto chapter.



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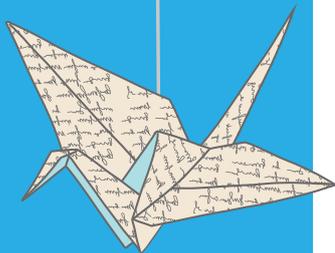
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- ✓ fostered deeper understanding of Japan as award-winning **translators**, **authors**, **editors** and **journalists**
- ✓ promoted cultural knowledge and exchange as **curators** of major Japanese art collections
- ✓ provided leadership in a variety of **non-profit organizations**, such as Japan-America Societies
- ✓ received **countless honors** in a wide array of academic disciplines and professions

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JETAA FOCUS: **TORONTO**

The JET Alumni Association of Toronto is one of the largest and most active chapters in Canada. We hold numerous events throughout the year for our members. Not sure if you're a member? If you were a JET and you live in Toronto or the surrounding area, you are automatically a member! There is no membership fee. If you are travelling to Toronto (or the surrounding area), you are welcome to join us on any event and still be treated like a member!

Some of the fun things we've been up to in 2012: Rock Climbing, Curling, Annual Art Show, Hanami Picnic, Japanese Cooking Class, Speaker Series, Nabe and Takoyaki parties—just to name a few!

In 2012, the Consulate General of Japan in Toronto presented JETAA Toronto with a commendation certificate to acknowledge our efforts with disaster relief in raising awareness and funds for the events of 3/11. We held a number of fundraising events, raising a total close to \$14,000. We also held a successful Speaker Series, featuring JETs who either had direct experience with the events of 3/11 or were involved in assistance on the ground. The Speaker Series included a Toronto JET, currently a journalist with the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation), who was sent on a mission to record the events as they unfolded. These JET alumni shared their experiences with our keen audience.

How JETAA is involved in the local Japanese community

One of the key mandates proposed by CLAIR for JETAA is further involvement with the Japanese community in each region. At JETAA Toronto, working with various Japan-related organizations has always been important. We work closely with JAVA Toronto, CJS (Canada Japan Society), JCCC (Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre) and others to promote events and activities pertinent to JETs and the Japanese community. We also hold a number of joint events throughout the year. For example, JETAA and JAVA hold an annual Hanami picnic, where the members of each organization can meet and network.



Wondering how you can get involved?

1. Volunteer to be on the executive. Our executive consists of about 15 to 20 JET alumni, depending on the year. Positions become available in January of each year. New executive members are voted in by the members during our Annual General Meeting. With positions ranging from Community Liaison, Events and Conference Coordinator, Communications Coordinator, Treasurer and Secretary to various support roles, there are a lot of ways to get involved. Build your resume, get involved and hang out with like-minded people!

2. Come out to our events. We generally hold about one event per month. We have something for everyone. From art shows to speaker series to sports events to pub nights and dinner parties, we've got a large selection. Check our website (jetaatoronto.ca) for updates. Or join our Facebook group for invites.

3. Join our dragon boat team. Our team is going strong! We start practice early summer and finish our last official race in the fall. The summer of 2012 has become our official "most winning-est" season yet. We took home two first place cups (from which we drank delightful champagne on the sly) and some really swanky gold medals. The cost of joining the team is partially subsidised for each member. Get fit, get out on the water, have some fun.

4. Take free Japanese lessons. That's right, you heard us! In partnership with the consulate, we offer free Japanese lessons. The lessons take place during the spring and fall. They are mostly geared to prepare you for taking the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test. However, students of every level are welcome to join. We've had the same lovely teacher for years and lots of returning students (so she must be doing something right!).

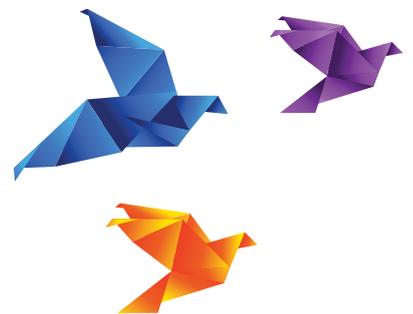
5. Contribute content to the JETAA Toronto Newsletter. Do you know the comic *Life After the B.O.E.* by David Namisato? It is now published in book form and various individual comics have been published and re-published all over the web. Did you know David first created *Life After the B.O.E.* for the JETAA Toronto Newsletter? Several years ago, his comic strip started appearing at the end of each of our monthly newsletters. Comic strips not your forte? Write a restaurant or film review for us. Start a monthly column. Have a blog on something Japan-related? We'll promote it for you. You get the idea—if you've got something creative to contribute, we want to hear about it!

6. Run a workshop or help out at PDOT. Pre-departure orientation for brand new JETs is a busy time. We organize and run a number of workshops for JETs about to set out for Japan. PDOT usually takes place in early summer. Workshop topics range from "Lesson Plans 101" to Japanese language to advice on romance and relationships. Contact us at info@jetaatoronto.ca on how to get involved.

7. Come to the Career and Re-entry Conference. Recently returned JETs can come out to this conference, which is held in November of every year. We offer networking opportunities, re-entry support, as well as career advice and guidance. You can also help run a workshop. Workshop topics range from "How to deal with reverse culture shock" to "Resume Writing Skills" to "Interview Skills".

Still on JET but want to receive our newsletter? Visit our website and sign up: www.jetaatoronto.ca

Have any questions? Comments? Ideas? We look forward to hearing from you! Email us at info@jetaatoronto.ca.



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REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK?

Paula Kerrigan, JETAA Ireland

You can't go home again

~Thomas Wolfe



I set out on my Japanese adventure from Ireland in 2008 and returned home in 2010. Like many of the ex-JETs I've met since my return, I loved my time in Japan but missed my family. Of course the phrase "reverse culture shock" was bandied about a lot as I was leaving Japan, but it's only two years later that I recognize that I went through it and notice that several of my friends struggled with it too. Cravings for onigiri aside, my experience seems to reflect what most people I've spoken to have been through. (Actually, craving onigiri or ramen is a fairly common symptom of reverse culture shock!) I don't mean to imply that I went through any kind of chronic depression or illness—that's not how reverse culture shock works.

Thomas Wolfe coined the phrase "You can't go home again" and in a nutshell that's what reverse culture shock is. A person suffering from culture shock typically goes through four stages: the honeymoon stage, negotiating stage, adjustment stage, and finally the mastery stage. Add in the onigiri stage and you've got a fairly clear description of reverse culture shock. When I got home the first few weeks were a whirlwind of catching up with old friends and devouring my mom's home cooking. But soon enough the novelty value ran out and the practicalities of life took over: job hunting, looking for apartments, trying to figure out who this Phillip Phillips guy is! Once I got the basics sorted it became a case of rebuilding relationships, re-establishing my financial situation, and reclaiming my remote-control rights from my younger brother. Finally, I've reached a point where the lady in the laundromat knows that I bring my laundry in on Tuesdays and my mother calls to remind me to get her a lottery ticket. These are signs that I have re-entered the world here—I've grown back into it and it's gotten used to having me around again.

Reverse culture shock hit me somewhere in the middle of all this. The part where I was trying to reclaim my rights in a world that should have been waiting for me with open arms. I spent nearly a year moving house until I finally found a place I could live in permanently. Many of my friends had to live with their parents for a lot longer that they would ideally have liked (and probably their parents would have liked too!). Of course finding a job was the next big thing and I took several temp jobs until I finally found a job that suited me. During this time I realized that there were two major areas of life back in Ireland that I was struggling with.

The first problem was that I was no longer a "foreigner". No more special treatment, children don't notice me in shops, and I never get dinner invitations from the mayor! Moreover, I can't get away with smiling and looking bewildered when I put my trash out on the wrong day. But there was more to life in Japan than that. More than anything, I missed the constant series of challenges and mini triumphs that had punctuated my daily life in Japan. The days of

regaling my western buddies with a tale of how I managed to get a broadband connection are long gone. I loved learning Japanese too. Recognizing the occasional kanji on a sign or using a phrase and actually getting what I wanted was incredibly satisfying to me. All of this disappeared when I came home.

The second issue that I, along with many of my returnee JET friends, seemed to encounter was a feeling of being slightly out of joint with the world around me. I came home with new, "foreign" gestures, like constantly making the batsu sign with my arms (a habit that has endured even after nearly three years of no one understanding it!). In Japan I learned to appreciate some things that at home are considered, well frankly, weird. Most of my friends back home would never ever dream of doing karaoke or eating sea urchin. To put it simply, I had grown at a slightly different angle from everyone I'd grown up with. It wasn't enough to make me obviously different, just enough to make me the butt of a lot of jokes for having "weird" taste.

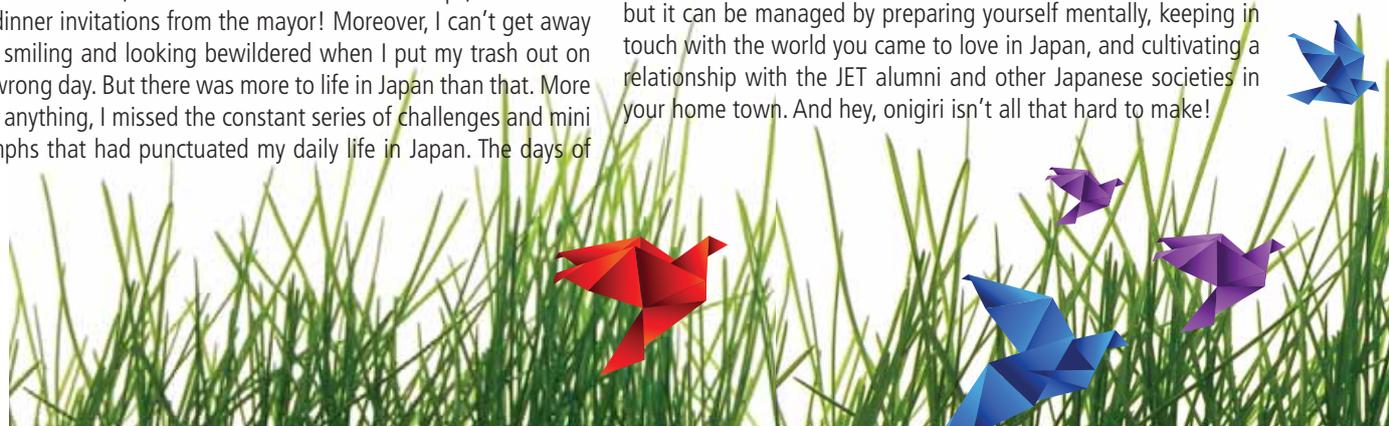
The first problem was that I was no longer a "foreigner". No more special treatment, children don't notice me in shops, and I never get dinner invitations from the mayor!

One of the best things I did to ease the transition was to stay in touch with Japanese friends and co-workers, as well as western friends who stayed on in Japan. In this day and age there are so many ways to stay in touch—even a message once a month will help to maintain the bond. This year when I got my nengajo it meant more to me than it ever had during my time in Japan.

I joined my JET alumni association, too. Thanks to them last year I managed to have hanami, take the JLPT, and see Kodo drumming in Dublin. They also helped me to get involved with advising the new group of Irish JETs going to Japan, a captivated audience to my tales of natto or travelling round Kyushu. This really helped me to feel like the experiences I'd had were still useful for something. Now I can spare my brother from another "When I was in Japan" story and take it to a group of people who understand and want to talk about it. Next week I start a taiko course, even though I never tried it in Japan. And I've always got a group of friends to karaoke with!

The one thing I didn't do that I think would really have helped was to realistically manage my expectations about coming home. Leaving Japan was an absolute whirlwind and I was so caught up in the moving I didn't take any time to consider what I was going home to. If I could give one piece of advice it would be to take a moment for yourself and realize that going home will have its challenges and that there will be good days and bad until you re-establish yourself.

Reverse culture shock is an unfortunate side effect of living abroad, but it can be managed by preparing yourself mentally, keeping in touch with the world you came to love in Japan, and cultivating a relationship with the JET alumni and other Japanese societies in your home town. And hey, onigiri isn't all that hard to make!



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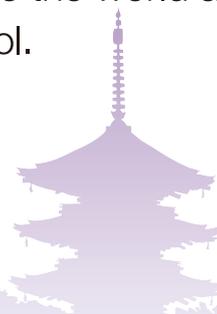


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We put your questions to the JET alumni community. Here's what they said...

Huge thanks go to James Hart, Kate Kirkwood, Smitha Prasadh, Blair Williams, John Gale, Steve Stoyanow, Christopher Sawala, Joseph Schott, Christopher Cataldi, Melanie Taylor and Shane Krumeich for their invaluable advice!

Looking back to your own time on JET, did you experience any reverse culture shock upon returning home? How did it manifest itself?

■ Going home, it's easy to forget that your friends all had lives while you were away too! They're not interested in hearing about Japan 24/7. Scale back your stories and focus on finding out what they've been up to in order to re-establish friendships.

■ I absolutely did. It started with the usual things: trying to climb into the right side of my car, bowing endlessly, feeling surprised when wait staff regularly approached us at restaurants, and so on. But I think another big reason for it was that I went almost immediately into a western corporate situation, where I suddenly had a ton of responsibility on my shoulders. My experience was impactful enough that I ended up doing my master's thesis on reverse culture shock, and developed a plan for an online community-based resource to help returnees transition upon leaving Japan. I'd really love to build it someday. www.smithaprasadh.com/thesis.html

■ I very definitely experienced reverse culture shock when I returned. I was very sensitive to the tone of voice people used, sometimes feeling almost physically abused by the amount of force Americans talked with. At home I often went to my room to get away from my parents for that reason, though they really weren't angry with me. I also was shocked to realize that home wasn't nearly as "normal" as I thought it was.

■ There is an undeniable correlation between the amount of attachment people you feel to Japan and the degree of "discomfort" you feel when you leave. Reverse culture shock is the gap between "perceived" and "actual"—people's images of a home setting largely unchanged from the time of departure, versus a home setting with people and places that have evolved over the 1-5 years of absence.

Considering the above, what would be your advice to current JETs for overcoming any impending culture shock?

■ JET was awesome, and it will be part of your life forever, but you can't live in the past. A whole new huge chapter of your life is beginning, so look forward, while keeping the happy memories in your heart.

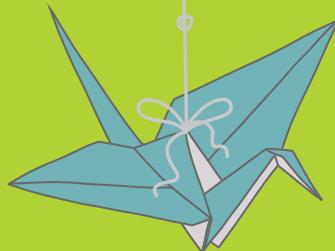
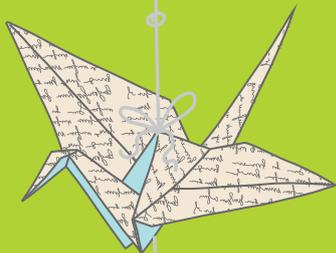
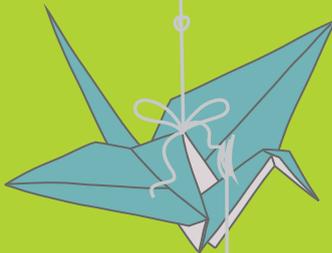
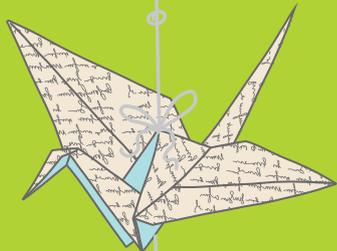
■ Reverse culture shock is every bit as real as culture shock, but harder to navigate because it's unexpected. On one end of the spectrum, it can be mild and comical (bowing at everyone, etc.); on the other end, it can lead to depression and strong feelings of being uprooted and lost. Most people fall somewhere in the middle. Just know that it will happen to many and it could happen to you. Preparedness is the first step.

■ Gently warn your friends, family, and loved ones back home that you may go through a rough patch when you return home, so they can be prepared to support you, and so they can also be prepared for any ways you've changed during your time away. If you've fallen out of touch with people at home, start reconnecting with them in the months before you go back.

■ Find others to talk to. JET alumni associations are great for that, and many of them do have "okaerinasai" parties in the fall. But if you return to a place where there isn't an easily accessible chapter or sub-chapter, go online and find communities there, or try to seek out other relevant local communities (friends who've spent time abroad, returnees of study abroad programs, Japanese cultural groups, etc.). No matter how you feel now, once you're away from Japan, there will be things you miss, and conversations you want to have that only other people whom have lived in Japan will be able to understand.

ASK THE ALUMNI!





■ Acknowledge it exists, that it is extremely natural. Make sure to focus both on the positives of your new situation, and the positives of your past experiences as opposed to comparing what you "lost" due to the new environment.

■ Stay busy doing things you enjoy. Stay active physically and mentally, and reconnect with friends/family. If you experience culture shock, write it down to remember these things because you may find it interesting looking back on it in the future.

What skills do you think you most developed on JET? Which would you emphasise most on your CV?

■ Public speaking, dealing with multi-cultural people and environments, flexibility, especially when things don't go the way you planned

■ Developing curriculum and educational activities, communication, networking, intercultural relations, public relations. All of these looks great on a CV.

■ Japanese, intercultural awareness, endurance, resilience.

■ It may be you've little relevant experience, but employers will still value your experience adapting to a difficult work environment. Be confident, and be open to jobs where you may start from the ground up. In the end, the important thing is to not limit yourself career path that builds on what you already know. All careers worth doing require continued study. Never stop learning, and never settle long in a job that places you on a path you are not comfortable with.

To those who pursued work elsewhere in Japan after their time on JET: what advice would you give to current JETs seeking employment elsewhere in Japan?

■ Study abroad rates in Japan are lower than any other developed country, and unlike other economies where such rates are increasing at a rapid pace, in Japan they are in rapid decline. The current working generation was largely raised in the bubble economy and has a false sense of security, and they are even less international-minded than their parents who are on their way out of the work force. All the while, a strong yen is for the first time fueling massive investment abroad. Until very recently, the Japanese economy has been largely isolated. This is an ideal environment for a foreigner who speaks Japanese well. Japan is going to be increasingly dependent on foreigners who speak Japanese to manage overseas investments, as someone will need to be the go-between for overseas offices and corporate management in Japan.

■ Japanese is a must if you want to remain. Never stop learning it. But you'll still need to pair this with another specialization, so continue your studies in Japanese, and whatever else it is you fancy.

■ Start early, reach out to alumni, have some Japanese certification, make a one-page bilingual typed resume that highlights skills (rather than a traditional 履歴書 that doesn't highlight much for non-Japanese natives).

■ Look for the sites that Japanese people use to look for work and register. Go to every career fair you can find, including those in your own country that target Japanese students studying abroad.

■ Network. Remember that if you didn't have work experience before going into JET then you will likely be applying for entry level positions, but without the luxury of being a fourth year college student. You will likely not fit the mould for what many large employers are searching for. The way to get around this is to network, network, network and go to more job fairs to meet people in person.

■ I went to school in Tokyo immediately after JET and messed up on the immigration stuff, even after double and triple checking everything with help from my JTE and Japanese friend. Make sure you get all the visa and immigration stuff right. I made sure I had it right, and still got it wrong and almost got deported!



Link Global Solution Inc.

INTEC Japan Inc. will be renamed "Link Global Solution Inc." as of 1 April, 2013.



INTEC Japan Inc. (<http://www.intecjapan.com>) was established as an independent company in 1989. Before that, the company had functioned as the in-house training unit for a European-owned trading company with more than 100 years of history in Japan.

INTEC works with many of Japan's largest companies to provide intercultural communication workshops, business skills training (for instance, presentations, meeting participation, meeting management, meeting facilitation, business writing, negotiations, conflict resolution, decision-making, and team leadership), facilitation services (e.g., for global meetings), and consulting projects (typically, performance management, motivation management, and global project management). In addition, INTEC continues to work with overseas-based multinational corporations.



In 2012, INTEC Japan Inc. was acquired by the Link and Motivation Group (<http://www.lmi.ne.jp/english/>), thereby becoming part of a large and respected HRM consulting and training group.

Company name : INTEC Japan Inc.
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 FAX : +81-(0)3-3267-5986
 Established : October 1971
 Incorporated : January 1989
 Capital : 50,000,000 yen
 Stockholder : Link and Motivation Inc. (100%)

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INTEC Japan Inc. will be renamed "Link Global Solution Inc." as of 1 April, 2013.

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MAIL : info@intecjapan.com



We are hiring Recruitment Consultants and Junior Consultants to join our teams in 2013

■ **About en world Japan** en world is a recruitment service company, focusing on managerial and senior-level staff positions. With 200 staff in 4 locations in Japan and 5 overseas, we are rapidly growing in the Asia Pacific region with over 5,000 placements in 14 years. Most of our clients are global, multinational companies, and our strength lies in teamwork throughout the entire group supporting clients find the best talents in the Asia Pacific market.

■ **What is Consultant's Job?** Each of our consultant focus on a specialized area, e.g. banking, life sciences, IT, etc., and works closely with clients to accurately match talent from our extensive and well-established networks. You will not be a mere intermediary between the client and applicant, but a key player as the trusted advisor for both parties. You will be working closely with your team members and across different teams.

Many ex-JETs Success Stories

There is a number of ex-JET at en world and many of them are the most successful consultants who are consistently ranked in the Top 10 achievers in the Company. Please read Ben's story, who started as a Junior Consultant after finishing JET in 2005 is now managing our IT team!



I found JET to be a great experience, however after two years I felt that I had learned all I could and wanted something new and stimulating. As I was interested in staying in Japan, a friend recommended the Recruitment Industry to me. I soon realised that there was a huge variety of professional skills to be gained, many of which were applicable in Japan and back home. Acting as a communicating point between jobseekers and companies, has served to develop my negotiation and mediation skills, my confidence both on the phone and in face-to-face situations with senior decision makers. I have made connections with some of the biggest retail, consumer goods and medical companies in the world.

■ **Extensive Training Programs** Through our internal training program we will arm you with the professional skill-set that will set you up for a life of business success. We also offer financial support for your own initiative for development, including Univ. courses, language courses, gym memberships, etc. Continuous self improvement is one of our core values and is taken very seriously by all of us at en world.

- **What We Look For** If you have these qualities, en world is the place for you!
- Ambitious Proactive Team Player
 - Business Minded Good Listener
 - Love working in Japan Confident
 - Like to see excellent financial rewards for your achievements

**TOP LEVEL COMPENSATION
 IN THE INDUSTRY**
 Successful Consultants earn
 over 10 Million Yen a Year

- We Can Offer You**
- Competitive, Transparent and Performance-based Salary Scheme
 - Extensive Training & Development
 - Team Work Environment
 - International & Diverse Workplace

Please meet us at the booth or contact < jobs@enworld.com >

Visit our website at www.enworld.com

JOIN THE JALT COMMUNITY

Get the benefits of membership:

- Build your career through an established network of teachers and administrators
- Receive practical and academic publications "The Language Teacher" and "JALT Journal"
- Discounted entrance to the International Conference – 25-28 October 2013 in Kobe
- Professional development with experienced faculty and researchers
- Free local chapter meetings – dozens of special interest groups
- Discounts at the Apple Store
- More ...

@



OPPORTUNITY



