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Job Hunting in Japan: Opportunities & Challenges

Self Analysis(自己分析)



What do I want to do? (How / Why / Where / When) **Decide !!!**

- **Size of the company** big/medium or small? ⇒ Be the tail of lion or the head of a rat? Big companies are more likely to have global business which mean are more likely to speak English
- **Field of work** and **order of preference** ⇒ 1) Energy, 2) Automotive, 3) Electronics, 4) Sensors, 5) Communication , 6) Heavy Industry, 7) Machinery, 8) Automation
- **Engineering Position** ⇒ Research, Development, Design, ~~System~~, ~~Testing~~, ~~Quality~~, ~~Maintenance~~
- **Professional Track**: Management? Technical? ⇒ Technical for the first 5 years
- **Place of Work** ⇒ Preferably Japan in Kansai area/if abroad preferably Canada, Europe
- **Miscellaneous** ⇒ Margin of Salary >XX0.000Yen/Month, Not much overtime, Not a black company



Preparations

- Attended the job hunting preparation lectures in IRIS
- Asked information and advice from my lab mates who finished their Job Hunting
- Connected to several job hunting websites. I particularly concentrated on the English ones. Here is a list: Global Leader, TopCareer, WorksJapan, MyNavi, Jobrass, RikuNavi, LandsNavi, RyuugaguseiNet, Nissei.
- Prepared answers to most common questions: CV, Self PR, Research Topic, Circles, Strong and Weak points, Challenges that you overcame, why Japan?
- Participated in several Job Fairs suggested by the Job Hunting staff in IRIS and the Job Hunting websites
- From the Job Hunting websites, I connected to the pages of companies in which I am interested and got updated with their information, seminars and company visit

Preparations



Prepare a **preliminary list** of companies with their fields of work and offered positions. Then establish the preliminary order of preference

1. **Energy** (1.Schlumberger, 2.JGC, 3.Chiyoda, Itochu, Cosmo Oil, ...)
2. **Automotive** (1.Nissan, 2.Honda, 3.Denso, 4.Toyota, 5.Mitsubishi, Suzuki, ...)
3. **Electronics** (1.Panasonic, 2.Mitsubishi Electric, Sharp, Sony, Fujitsu, Toshiba,....)
4. **Sensors** (1.Olympus, 2.Furuno, Keyence, Terumo, Fuji Electric,)
5. **Communication** (NTT, ...)
6. **Heavy Industry** (1.Hitachi, Mitsubishi, Kawasaki, Fuji, Sumitomo, IHI)
7. **Machinery** (Itochu, Komatsu, Toyota Industries)
8. **Automatics** (SMC Corp)

Selection



- First easiest way to select a company is to go to their website and check their information. I could eliminate many companies just by checking their websites. I gave more importance to companies that are in Osaka/Kansai area
 - Some information that I received from my lab mates who did job hunting helped me in the selecting process
 - The companies briefings is among the best ways to evaluate the suitability of a company
 - To summarize the process:
 1. Select fields
 2. Prepare a list of companies operating in each field
 3. Visit their briefing to get the first impression
 4. Select one or two companies in each field based on English speaking, place (Close to Osaka), reputation, position
 5. Order companies based on my own preference
- ⇒ Company A ⇒ Company B ⇒ Company C ⇒ Company D ⇒ Company F

Recruitment Process

Briefing

Company Briefing:

- I attended an English Job fair in Kyoto.
- There was five companies asking English speaking staff.
- Company T was the only company that was related to Software and Technology fields
- I asked them many questions about their activities and kept contact with them.
- I sent them a message about their company visit and they invited me.



Recruitment Process



Company Visit:

I didn't understand most of what they were talking about. However, I could find an interesting division where I felt that I could do something. I also found a Japanese girl staff that can speak good English. I asked her many questions. She was luckily working in the same division.

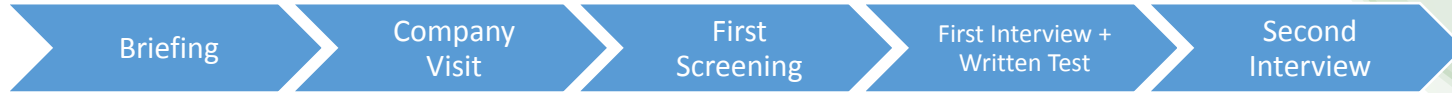
Recruitment Process



First Screening:

- The company asked an English CV
- I send the and English and a Japanese CV, but I did more. I have sent them a Cover Letter

Recruitment Process



First Interview:

- 5 interviewers. They offered me the possibility to speak in English, but I decided to do it with my broken Japanese. The interviewers were very kind. At the end, they asked if I want to sit for a Japanese written exam. They said it is fine to skip it. I told them that I want to try God help me

Second Interview

- 5 interviewers including the president of the company. Interviewing condition were perfect and I could talk comfortably. Again, I chose to do it in Japanese. I felt that the RH staff was kind of supporting me. They asked if I all the Japanese cover letter was done by me. I explained to them that the ideas are mine, but I got the help of one of my friends to translate it.

Recruitment Process



Job offer / Naitei:

- The company called me to inform me that I was selected (but I doubted that I may have misunderstood what they said, so I waited till receiving the letter of the job offer to be reassured). They asked me if I am going to continue my job hunting, I told them that I happy with their offer and that I am giving up.

Visit to the company:

- To understand better my task, ask about money and welfare, The responsible of general affairs took me to a trip around Wakayama and showed me supermarkets and important facilities

Keys of success



- Be always on Time (Always 15min earlier)
- Respect deadlines.
- Wear appropriate clothes
- Talk Keigo and follow Japanese etiquette as much as possible
- Keep contact and reply to messages without delay
- Honesty, Self-contentment, Modesty
- Have a clear vision

Advice (1)



- Be sure that your graduation time is suitable for the company. Some companies only recruits in April
- Some companies don't hire doctors, better ask them from the beginning
- In the briefings, many companies cannot tell you that they don't accept doctors, people who can't speak Japanese, ...
- Study all companies in the job fair beforehand. When you are there, you should have already decided which companies you are going to visit.
- Don't apply for many companies that are in the same field. Some companies do their interviews in the same day.
- Use a separate email address for job hunting, use a professional name

Advice (2)



- Job hunting is tiring and time consuming. Don't distribute your energy on dozens of applications. You will finish by exhausting yourself.
- Don't apply to big companies only, apply for medium scale companies, too
- Don't limit yourself on looking for a particular position, there are many: Research, Development, Design, SE, ...
- Job Hunting is costly, especially if your are planning to do it outside Kansai Area. Your spending will depend on the number of companies you applied and their location.
- In big companies, finding the position you need in the field you want may requires you to go to many briefings and through several interviews
- For many companies, candidates are also evaluated in the briefings and company visit. Be ready !!!

Opportunities

- In Japan, some of the big companies are not very strict about matching between your specialty during study and work contents. Many of them will train you and will keep changing several department till you find a good match. If you are not happy with your current field of study and want to do something different at work, it is possible, but needs more effort to adapt
- Some companies pay your transportation fee for the interview
- Many companies use recommendation system. University or Professor recommendations are quite helpful. If you take university recommendation, be sure to not drop the offer!! Dropping it means very likely that the offer will not be taken again and future generation will miss such opportunity! There is a big lack of awareness about this point
- OB/OG can be very helpful to find you a job or give you information about their experience
- There are several job hunting websites and recruiting agents.
- Osaka university provide big help with job hunting and offer training lessons
- Job seminars help to give an idea about the companies. Industrial fairs give you about the products
- Several companies provide cheap dormitories, pay part of your rent, help you with hikkoshi, pay your transportation fee etc
- English job hunting seminars

What can you do now?

- Learn Japanese, sit for JLPT, and it is ok to fail it, helps to make your target clear (Business level will be great, though not easy to reach)
- Prepare most common question asked in interview
- Join clubs or association, community work, voluntary activities to understand better Japanese culture and their way of thinking.
- Train yourself to respect Japanese manners (don't put your hand in your pocket, ...)

Challenges after finding a job

- If you are too knowledgeable, how to contribute in the team without vexing other
- If you are less knowledgeable, how to compensate for your lack
- Japanese language, keigo
- Japanese Manners
- Life/Work Balance (particularly in case of Zangy)

Very Common Questions

- Why did you choose Japan?
- Will you be able to adapt to Japanese environment?
- What is special about you?
- Are you technically fit?

