

Preparing for Job Interviews in Japan

A. Overview of Japanese Job Interviews

1. Characteristics of Japanese Interviews
2. Preparation Before the Interview
3. Tips for Online Interviews
4. Interview Manners
5. Example of Self-Introduction
6. What Japanese Companies Evaluate
7. Common Bad Interview Behaviors (NG Examples)
8. Tips for Interview Success (Summary)

B. Appearance and Grooming for Interviews

1. Basic Rules
2. Clothing
3. Hairstyle
4. Face
5. Accessories
6. For Online Interviews
7. Cleanliness Check

C. Common Interview Questions

1. Frequently Asked Questions
2. How to Answer "Why Do You Want to Work Here?"
3. Questions About Your Visa (Residence Status)
4. What Japanese Companies Worry About
5. About the Work Location
6. Adapting to Life in Japan
7. Family Support and Understanding

A. Overview of Japanese Job Interviews

1. Characteristics of Japanese Interviews

First, it is important to understand Japanese interview culture.

Key Points

- In Japan, politeness and personality are highly valued.
 - Teamwork is very important.
 - Companies evaluate not only skills, but also cooperation and attitude.
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2. Preparation Before the Interview

Things you should do before the interview.

Checklist

- Read the company's website.
 - Understand the company's business and job duties.
 - Prepare your resume/CV (see separate PDF).
 - Prepare your reason for applying.
 - Practice your self-introduction.
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3. Tips for Online Interviews

Camera Setup

- Keep the camera at eye level.
 - Make sure your face is clearly visible.
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4. Interview Manners

There are some rules that are especially important in Japanese interviews.

Important Manners

- Enter the interview room or online meeting 5 minutes early.
- Say "Nice to meet you / Thank you for your time" at the beginning.

- Say “Thank you very much” at the end.
 - Listen carefully until the interviewer finishes speaking.
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5. Example of Self-Introduction

Prepare your self-introduction in advance.

Include:

- Your name
 - Your country
 - Educational background
 - Skills
 - Why you want to work in Japan
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6. What Japanese Companies Evaluate

Companies usually look for:

- Good manners
 - Teamwork skills
 - Serious attitude
 - Motivation to work long-term
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7. Common Bad Interview Behaviors (NG Examples)

Avoid:

- Being late
 - Turning the camera off
 - Wearing overly casual clothes
 - Giving answers that are too short
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8. Tips for Interview Success (Summary)

Important Tips

- Speak with a smile.

- Speak slowly and clearly.
 - Be polite.
 - Thank the interviewer after the interview.
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B. Appearance and Grooming for Interviews

1. Basic Rules

In Japanese interviews, cleanliness and neat appearance are very important.

Key Points

- Wear clean clothes.
- Choose simple clothing.
- Avoid flashy styles.

Companies want to know whether you can behave professionally in the workplace.

2. Clothing

For Men

- Suit (black, navy, or gray)
- White shirt
- Simple necktie

For Women

- Suit or jacket
- Simple blouse
- Clothing that is not too flashy

Note: Some IT companies allow slightly casual clothing, but if you are unsure, a dress shirt is the safest choice.

3. Hairstyle

Recommended

- Clean hair
- Hair should not cover your eyes
- Avoid flashy hair colors

NG Examples

- Pink hair
- Green hair

Acceptable Colors

- Black
 - Brown
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4. Face

Men

- Shave your beard.

Women

- Natural makeup is recommended.
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5. Accessories

In Japanese interviews, fewer accessories are better.

Avoid:

- Large earrings
 - Flashy necklaces
 - Sunglasses
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6. For Online Interviews

Appearance is important even in online interviews.

Tips

- Wear a suit at least for your upper body.
- Choose a quiet place.
- Use a bright room.
- Keep the background simple.

If you sit with a wall behind you, people cannot see inside your room.

7. Cleanliness Check

Before the interview, check:

- Your hair
 - Wrinkles on your shirt
 - Dirty shoes
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C. Common Interview Questions

1. Frequently Asked Questions

These questions are very common and important.

Examples

- Why do you want to work in Japan?
 - Why do you want to work for this company?
 - What are your strengths?
 - What are your weaknesses?
 - What are your future goals?
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2. How to Answer “Why Do You Want to Work Here?”

In Japanese interviews, your reason for applying is very important.

Companies want to know whether you are likely to work for them long-term.

Answers You Should Avoid

It is not good to give only these reasons:

Examples

- For money
- To support my family
- Because I want to live in Japan

Even if these are true, saying only these reasons may create a bad impression.

Good Examples

Show interest in the company or the work itself.

Examples

- I am interested in Japanese technology.
- I am interested in this company's services.
- I want to learn professional skills in Japan.

3. Questions About Your Visa (Residence Status)

Japanese companies may ask about your visa during the interview.

Common Questions

- When can you start working?
- What type of visa do you currently have?
- Do you need company support for your visa?

Prepare to Explain:

- Your current visa type
- Your visa expiration date
- When you can start working

Sometimes Interviewers Do Not Know Visa Rules Well

In small or medium-sized companies, interviewers may not fully understand the visa system.

In that case, it is good if you can explain it simply.

Example

“If I receive a job offer, the company will support the work visa process. The procedure usually takes about one or two months.”

It Is Important to Make the Company Feel Reassured

Companies worry about visa problems.

You can reassure them by explaining:

- You can communicate in Japanese.
 - Your visa process is possible.
 - You plan to work in Japan long-term.
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4. What Japanese Companies Worry About

When hiring foreign workers, Japanese companies are very concerned about whether the person will stay for a long time.

Because of this, they may ask questions like the following.

Q. Do You Intend to Work Long-Term?

Companies worry that employees may quit quickly.

Examples

- How long would you like to work in Japan?
- Do you plan to stay in Japan for a long time?

Good Example Answer

“Yes, I would like to work in Japan long-term and build my career here.”

5. About the Work Location

Companies in rural areas may ask questions such as:

Examples

- Is it okay if the workplace is not in a big city like Tokyo?
- Can you work in the countryside?

Companies worry that workers may quit because the area is not urban.

Example Answers

- I think working in rural Japan is a very good experience.
 - I also come from a non-urban area, so I can work there without problems.
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6. Adapting to Life in Japan

People from warm countries, especially in Southeast Asia, may receive questions like these.

Examples

- Japan's winters are cold. Will you be okay?
- Can you adapt to life in Japan?

Companies worry that workers may return home because they cannot adapt to Japanese life.

Example Answer

"I understand that winters in Japan are cold, and I am prepared for that."

Important Points to Communicate

- Your intention to work long-term
- Your willingness to adapt to Japanese life
- Your flexibility to work in rural areas

These points help companies feel reassured.

7. Family Support and Understanding

In some countries, even if the applicant wants to work in Japan, family opposition may prevent them from coming.

Because of this, companies may ask questions such as:

Common Questions

- Does your family support your plan to work in Japan?
- What does your family think about you working in Japan?

Companies Worry About:

- The applicant being unable to come because of family opposition
- Declining the job offer after acceptance
- Returning home soon after arriving in Japan

Recruitment and visa procedures require time and money, so companies want to confirm that the applicant can truly come to Japan.

How to Answer

It is reassuring if you explain that your family understands and supports your decision.

Example

“My family supports my decision to work in Japan.”

Even if your family is not fully supportive yet, you should discuss it carefully before accepting a job offer so that you will not decline later.

It is important to show that your decision is firm and clear.

Things to Think About Before the Interview

It is recommended that you discuss your plans with your family before the interview.

Confirm:

- Whether your family understands your plan to work in Japan
- How long you plan to stay in Japan
- Whether you have explained life in Japan to your family