

## Japanese Business Culture & Practices

### Section 1

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#### 【Course Outline / Description】

How did Japanese business practices and industry evolve and grow from the Meiji Restoration to the present? How does culture affect management? How did pre and post-war Japanese government economic policies, industrial structures, cultural influences, and production technologies shape Japanese industry and business practices? What is happening with these issues presently in Japan? Will Japan be able to overcome the change in demographics and increasing global competitive pressures?

This course tries to answer these questions by tracing historical factors and changes. The course then looks at the future of Japanese companies by looking at innovative companies like Rakuten, Recruit, Uniqlo, Nintendo and Softbank. Utilizing a teaching approach that mixes cases, lectures, and class discussions, students will learn key concepts and tools used in understanding and solving management problems in the Japanese market context.

The course also introduces the typical operational style of Japanese companies, and cultural business terms and etiquette to students interested in working for a Japanese company in the future.

### Section 2

#### 【Course Objectives/Goals/Learning Outcomes】

The course will enable the student to:

- Review existing literature and theory in the field of Japanese management, and Japanese business culture
- Understand an overview of the modern Japanese business environment and historical factors that have influenced its evolution
- Explain the most important social concepts in Japanese society and their relevance to Japanese management and Japanese business culture
- Discuss the most prominent aspects of Japanese management, such as production management, distribution and management activities within a Japanese corporation
- Develop a working level understanding of the unique working style and culture of a Japanese organization

## 【Class Schedule/Class Environment, Literature and Materials】

	Schedule of Instruction	Work outside of Classroom Activities
Lesson 1	Student, Teacher, and Course Introduction;	Reading; Yataro Iwasaki: Founding Mitsubishi
Lesson 2	Macro level Historical, Geographical, and Economical Perspectives: (Meiji - Pre-War) The <i>Bakuhau</i> system	Reading: Flath, "The Japanese Economy - Ch. 2: Economic History, Part 1: The Tokugawa Period (1603–1868) and the Meiji Era (1868–1912)"
Lesson 3	Role of <i>Zaibatsu/Keiretsu</i>	Reading: McGuire/Dow "Keiretsu: Past, Present, Future" Reading: Miwa/Ramseyer: The Fable of the Keiretsu Ch. 2
Lesson 4	Role of <i>Zaibatsu/Keiretsu (Continued)</i>	Reading: Miwa/Ramseyer: The Fable of the Keiretsu Ch. 4
Lesson 5	<i>Mochiai</i> and Role of Banks in Japanese Business Eco System	Reading: Abegglen: Japanese Style Management
Lesson 6	What is Japanese Management and what are its roots? Can there be a balance between Continuity and Change?	Video: Morita: Japanese and American Management
Lesson 7	The Japanese Employment System Role of Unions	Reading: Blumenthal: The Practice of Amakudari within the Japanese Employment System
Lesson 8	Strategic and Mgmt. Roots of Japanese vs. US Companies "The Hermit Crab Dilemma"	Reading: Hoshi & Kashyap - Ch. 3
Lesson 9	Post War Economy and Reforms Role of Government in shaping economic success?	Video: Quality Circles
Lesson 10	Deming and the Quality Factor Abegglen Study - The Japanese Factory	Video: Kaizen & Toyota Production System Reading: Theory Z and Export of Japanese Management Techniques
Lesson 11	Japanese Productivity Improvements and Japan as Number 1	Reading: Will Japanese Management style work in US?
Lesson 12	Student Presentations	Prep: Student Presentations
Lesson 13	Student Presentations	Reading: A Case of Three Companies: The Survival Strategies of Sony, Hitachi, and Canon
Lesson 14	Evolution of the Japanese Automotive vs. Electronics Industry	Read: Abegglen - The Graying of Japan: The End of Growth?
Lesson 15	21st Century Japan: Current State of the Japanese Company Changing Demographics and Aging of Japan	Reading: Black & Morrison: Sunset in the Land of the Rising Sun
Lesson 16	Business Otsukiai	Reading: Japanese Business Etiquette
Lesson 17	Business Manners	Reading: Rakuten
Lesson 18	Case Study: Rakuten	Video: Recruit Innovation History
Lesson 19	Case Study: Recruit	Reading: Hasegawa: Nintendo
Lesson 20	Case Study: Nintendo	Reading: Hasegawa: Canon
Lesson 21	Case Study: Canon	Reading: Hasegawa: Toyota
Lesson 22	Case Study: Toyota	Reading: Softbank - An Internet Keiretsu
Lesson 23	Case Study: Softbank	Reading: Abe: Japanese Management in the 21st Century
Lesson 24	Future of Japanese Management and Japanese Companies; Lessons Learned from Nissan/Ghosn	Watanabe: Japanese Management - Strengths to Preserve
Lesson 25	Team Presentation Prep Meeting	Reading: Gaijin Sumo Wrestlers Help Japanese Traditions to Carry On
Lesson 26	<i>Gaman, Ganbaru</i> and other nuances of Working in Japan	Prep: Case Study
Lesson 27	Group Case Study Presentations	Final Group Presentation Due

Lesson 28	Group Case Study Presentations	Prep For Final Presentation
Lesson 29	Group Case Study Presentations	Prep For Final Presentation
Lesson 30	Course Review, Feedback, & Celebration	Final Group Paper Due
Notes	The schedule is tentative and will change to reflect University/Public holidays; the topics covered on each proposed date may change/expand depending on the understanding, background, feedback and pace of the students.	

**【Textbooks/Reading Materials】**

This class will only use a course pack, which will be provided by the instructor on the first day of the class.

**Section 4**

**【Learning Assessments/Grading Rubric】**

Final Exam	10	%
Class Participation	25	%
Individual Research Presentation	25	%
Group Presentation	25	%
Group Case Study Paper	15	%

All grades and assignment details will be posted on Blackboard.

**Section 5**

**【Additional Information】**

Almost 25 years ago, I took my first class on the Japanese Business System which changed my life forever and I would like to invite you to experience the same. I will try and create a very interactive learning environment and a focus on real world experience based on my 20+ years of working in Japan including as the CFO of a major Japanese public company. The workload in this class is fairly intensive (3-5 hours per week) and it is critical that students be active participants in class, providing critical analyses of key issues, and debating alternative courses of action. This requires careful preparation of the assigned readings before class. You will inevitably be asked to present/express your opinion on material covered in class.

Students are expected to behave just like they would in a real company and be present at all class sessions, prepare the assigned readings carefully (this will be discussed further during the first few weeks of class), and have all pertinent readings with you on the day of class. You are also required to meet scheduled deadlines for your assignments, in-class presentations, and final project. The majority of each class will be held in a seminar format and a few sessions will also have some time dedicated to learning and practicing Japanese cultural business etiquette and terms e.g. learning how to exchange Business Cards; Learning to Bow etc. The readings and concepts build on each other, so preparation for class sessions, attention and good note-taking during class, and participation in-class is very important. Students will form groups and discuss/solve case studies on Japanese Management.

I strongly feel this will be a good class for you if you are exploring a career related to Japan and/or want to work for a Japanese or Foreign company in Japan (or a Japanese Company Overseas).