

Topics in Japanese Business (3rd Year Level)

Instructor	Assistant Professor Nilushika Chandima Jayasinghe, PhD	
Course Outline / Description		
This course provides the insight on Japanese industry and business practices, focusing on historical evolution, government policies' impact, cultural influences, and case studies of innovative firms in Japan. Through this course students will be able to learn about typical Japanese companies, cultural terminology, and business etiquette relevant for future careers in Japan or with Japan-related companies		
Course Objectives / Goals /Learning Outcomes		
After completing this course successfully, students must be able to;		
<div>1. Recall key events and significant milestones in the evolution of Japanese business practices and industries.</div> <div>2. Explain how specific government economic policies, industrial structures, and cultural influences have collectively shaped the evolution of Japanese industries and business practices.</div> <div>3. Apply knowledge of historical and cultural factors to predict potential future trends and challenges for Japanese companies.</div> <div>4. Analyze case studies of innovative Japanese and the factors contributing to their success and impact on the business landscape.</div> <div>5. Critically evaluate the effectiveness of traditional Japanese business practices in adapting to global economic changes.</div>		
Class Schedule		
Class	Topic	Assignment
Class 1	Introduction to the Course: Course overview and objectives, Intended Learning Outcomes, Assessment methods and other relevant information, Student introductions and expectations.	Icebreaker activity to facilitate student interaction. *Read — Introduction Part - Hendry, Joy. (2003). Understanding Japanese society. London; New York: Routledge Curzon
Class 2	Evolution of Japanese Business Practices (Part I): A Historical Overview (pre-Meiji era to World War II)	Read – Chapter 1 and 2 - Ohno, K. (2005). The Path Traveled by Japan as a Developing Country: Economic Growth from Edo to Heisei, Yuhikaku Publishing Co. Ltd., Tokyo.
Class 3	Evolution of Japanese Business Practices (Part II): Postwar reconstruction and economic policies on Japan's industrial growth	Read – chapter 10- Ohno, K. (2005). The Path Traveled by Japan as a Developing Country: Economic Growth from Edo to Heisei, Yuhikaku Publishing Co. Ltd., Tokyo.

Class 4	Postwar Economic Policies and Industrial Structures: Economic policies and their impact on postwar reconstruction	Read – Chapter 14 -Gordon, Andrew. A (2014), Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present. Oxford University Press
Class 5	Economic Transformations in Modern Japan: From High Growth to Post-Bubble Era	Read - Yoshino, Y., and F. Taghizadeh-Hesary (2015). Japan's Lost Decade: Lessons for Other Economies. ADBI Working Paper 521. Tokyo: Asian Development Bank Institute. Available: http://www.adbi.org/working-paper/2015/04/08/6590.japan.lost.decade.economies/
Class 6	Corporate Conglomerates and Business Networks in Japan: The Role of Zaibatsu, Keiretsu, and Sogo-Shosha	Read - Miwa, Yoshiro and Ramseyer, J. Mark, The Fable of the Keiretsu (March 2001). Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=263979 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.263979
Class 7	Financial Intermediaries and Credit Networks in Japanese Business: Mochiai and the Role of Banks	Read - Gilson, R. J., & Roe, M. J. (1993). Understanding the Japanese keiretsu: Overlaps between corporate governance and industrial organization. Yale Law Journal, 871-906.
Class 8	The Role of MITI (Ministry of International Trade and Industry) and economic planning	Read - 'Industrial Policy in Japan: 70-Year History since World War II' By Tetsuji Okazaki
Class 9	Japanese Business Culture: An overview of cultural values influencing Japanese business practices and the importance of hierarchy, consensus-building, and group orientation.	Read – 'From Understanding to Navigating Japanese Business Culture' by EU-Japan Center Report Group discussion on the perceived cultural differences in Japan
Class 10	Japanese Management Style: Organizational Structures and Management Practices in Typical Japanese Companies	Read - Firkola, P. (2006). Japanese management practices past and present. Economic Journal of Hokkaido University, 35, 115-130.
Class 11	Comparison of Western Management Style Vs. Japanese Management Style	*Individual Assignment - Case study Analysis

Class 12	Theory Z: Merging Eastern and Western Management Styles	Group Discussion - Discuss and analyze Ouchi's Theory Z and its relevance in contemporary organizational contexts.
Class 13	Cross-cultural Communication and Negotiation: Understanding non-verbal cues and must know etiquette in meetings and negotiations.	Read - 'Communicating with Japanese in Business' by JETRO ** Group Project
Class 14	Technology and Innovation in Japanese Businesses: Trends in robotics, electronics, and automotive industries	Listen – Track 1 - Japan: An Investment and Innovation Hub https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v_-6RZQdXf4 Discuss – The most innovative thing you have experienced in Japan
Class 15	Mid-Semester Examination	N/A
Class 16	Case Study 1 – Toyota	Additional Reading – Sustainability Data Book 2023 of Toyota
Class 17	Case Study 2 – Sony Corporation	Listen – Track 2 youtube.com/watch?v=v_-6RZQdXf4
Class 18	Entrepreneurship and startups in Japan: The entrepreneurial ecosystem, challenges, success stories, and government initiatives supporting startup ventures	Read - Environment for Startups in Japan and Initiatives in the Regional Japan by Research and Statistics Department
Class 19	Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Japan: Japanese approach to CSR and sustainability practices.	Read - Tanimoto, K. (2013). Corporate social responsibility and management process in Japanese corporations. World Review of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sust. Development, 9(1).
Class 20	Trends and challenges facing Japanese companies in global markets: Strategies for innovation and adaptation	Additional Reading – 'Digital Transformation in Japan' by EU- Japan Center
Class 21	Supply Chain Management in Japanese Companies	Read - Zhu, Q., Geng, Y., Fujita, T., & Hashimoto, S. (2010). Green supply chain management in leading manufacturers: Case studies in Japanese large companies. Management Research Review, 33(4), 380-392.

Class 22	Case Study 3 - SoftBank Group Corporation	Listen – Track 3 - SoftBank: piecing the puzzle together FT Film https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FdsCjokUGi0
Class 23	Case Study 4 - Recruit Co., Ltd.: Recruit Co., Ltd.	Additional Reading - Recruit Group Profile: Inside Out 2021
Class 24	Globalization and International Business Strategies: Expansion strategies of Japanese companies into global markets and challenges and opportunities in international business ventures.	Read - Sasaki, I., Nummela, N., & Ravasi, D. (2021). Managing cultural specificity and cultural embeddedness when internationalizing: Cultural strategies of Japanese craft firms. Journal of International Business Studies, 52, 245-281.
Class 25	Innovation Ecosystem in Japan: Exploring the factors and institutions contributing to Japan's innovation ecosystem.	Additional Reading – JETRO Global Connection - Accelerate Innovation with Japan - Report About Japan's Innovation Ecosystem
Class 26	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiatives in Japanese Companies: Challenges and Strategies	Read - Bader, A. K., Froese, F. J., Cooke, F. L., & Schuster, T. (2022). Gender diversity management in foreign subsidiaries: A comparative study in Germany and Japan. Journal of International Management, 28(3), 100921.
Class 27	Future Trends in Japanese Business: Analyzing demographic shifts and their business implications, exploring emerging industries and technologies shaping Japan's economic landscape	Additional Reading – Future Predictions 2040 in Japan: The Dawn of the Limited-Labor Supply Society https://www.works-i.com/english/item/FuturePredictions2040_JP.pdf
Class 28	Group Presentation Preparations	N/A
Class 29	Group Presentation	N/A
Class 30	Group Presentation	N/A
Please note that the syllabus may undergo minor revisions. Students are expected to engage in group discussions on the assigned case studies during the class hours.		
Additional Readings		
Additional reading materials will be provided by the professor during the class sessions		

Course Evaluation	
Assignment	Allocated Marks
Unannounced Quizzes – 02	10%
Individual Assignment – 01	25%
Active Participation in the class	5%
Mid -Semester Examination	15%
Group Project	25%
End-Semester Examination	20%
* Individual Assignment	
<p>Assignment Title: Comparative Analysis of Management Styles: Google vs. Nintendo</p> <p>Objective: To analyze and contrast the management styles of Google and Nintendo, exploring their organizational cultures, leadership approaches, and strategic management practices.</p> <p>Assignment Guidelines:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction: Provide a brief introduction to Google and Nintendo, highlighting their industries, core business activities, and global influence. Organizational Culture and Values: Describe the organizational culture and core values of each company and discuss how these cultural aspects influence decision-making, employee behavior, and innovation within each organization. Leadership Styles: Analyze the leadership styles exhibited by key executives or founders (e.g., Larry Page and Shigeru Miyamoto) in Google and Nintendo, respectively. Compare their leadership philosophies, approaches to team management, and methods of fostering creativity and innovation. Management Practices: Compare the management practices of Google and Nintendo in areas such as: Employee empowerment and autonomy, Decision-making processes, Communication strategies, Performance evaluation and feedback mechanisms, Strategic Management and Innovation: Evaluate how each company approaches strategic management and long-term planning. Discuss their strategies for innovation, including R&D investment, product development cycles, and adaptation to market trends. Impact on Organizational Performance: Assess the impact of management styles on organizational performance, growth, and competitive advantage for both Google and Nintendo. Provide examples of successful initiatives or challenges faced by each company due to their management approaches. 	

7. **Conclusion:** Summarize the key similarities and differences in management styles between Google and Nintendo. Reflect on the implications of these differences for organizational effectiveness, employee satisfaction, and adaptability in dynamic business environments.

Formatting and Submission: The assignment should be typed and formatted according to APA style guidelines. Include a title page with your name, course title, instructor's name, and date of submission. Use headings and subheadings to organize your analysis clearly. Aim for a well-structured and coherent argument supported by evidence from reputable sources. Your assignment must not exceed fifteen pages. Please submit the completed assignment by the 20th class. Late submissions are not accepted.

Evaluation Criteria:

1. Demonstration of understanding and depth of analysis in comparing and contrasting management styles – 25%
2. Clarity and organization of the content, including effective use of headings and subheadings - 20%
3. Integration of relevant examples and evidence to support arguments – 25%
4. Adherence to APA style for formatting, citations, and references – 15%
5. Overall presentation of the Assignment – 15%

Marks will initially be given out of 100% and subsequently converted to a scale out of 25

Resources: Use scholarly articles, books, company reports, and reputable business journals to support your analysis. Ensure all sources are properly cited and referenced in APA style.

****Group Project Instructions**

Project Title: Navigating Cross-cultural Communication and Negotiation: Non-verbal Cues and Etiquette Essentials in Global Business

Project Overview: This project aims to explore the complexities of cross-cultural communication and negotiation in global business contexts, emphasizing the importance of understanding non-verbal cues and cultural etiquette. Students will investigate how cultural differences impact communication styles, decision-making processes, and negotiation outcomes in international settings.

Objectives:

1. **Research Cultural Dimensions and Communication Styles:** Explore Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory and other frameworks that define cultural differences in communication (e.g., high-context vs. low-context cultures). Analyze how cultural values influence verbal and non-verbal communication norms in business interactions.

2. **Study Non-verbal Cues and Their Significance:** Investigate common non-verbal cues (e.g., body language, gestures, facial expressions) and their interpretations across different cultures. Examine case studies or examples where misinterpretations of non-verbal cues have impacted business negotiations.
3. **Examine Cultural Etiquette in Meetings and Negotiations:** Identify key cultural etiquette practices and protocols observed in business meetings and negotiations across major cultural regions (e.g., Asia, Europe, Middle East). Compare and contrast etiquette expectations in formal and informal business settings.
4. **Explore Case Studies and Real-world Examples:** Select case studies of successful and unsuccessful cross-cultural negotiations (e.g., mergers, joint ventures) to analyze the role of cultural understanding and effective communication. Discuss real-world examples where cultural competence played a critical role in achieving business objectives or resolving conflicts.

Methodology:

1. **Literature Review:** Conduct a comprehensive review of academic journals, books, and reputable sources on cross-cultural communication, negotiation theories, and cultural etiquette.
2. **Case Studies:** Analyze relevant case studies and real-world examples to illustrate the application of theoretical concepts in business settings.
3. **Interviews (Optional):** Optionally, conduct interviews with professionals experienced in international business or cross-cultural negotiations to gain practical insights.
4. **Data Analysis:** Utilize qualitative methods to analyze cultural dimensions, communication styles, and negotiation strategies across different cultures.

Project Deliverables:

1. **Project Report:** The report must be detailed report summarizing findings on cross-cultural communication theories, non-verbal cues, cultural etiquette practices, and their implications for global business negotiations. The report must not exceed 30 pages in length.
2. **Presentation:** Develop an interactive presentation that showcases key insights, analyzes case studies, and offers practical recommendations to enhance effective cross-cultural communication and negotiation. Each presentation should be limited to 15 minutes, and evaluation criteria will be provided beforehand to guide the assessment process.
3. **Discussion and Reflection:** There will be a discussion session where students present their findings, engage in peer feedback, and reflect on the importance of cultural competence in international business.

Submission Guidelines: The report and the presentation are both due on the day of the presentation.

Evaluation Criteria: Marks will initially be given out of 100% and subsequently converted to a scale out of 25

1. **Depth of Research (20%):** Extent and quality of research conducted on cross-cultural communication theories, non-verbal cues, and cultural etiquette in business settings. Using and analyzing of relevant case studies and examples to illustrate concepts and theories.
2. **Understanding of Theoretical Concepts (15 %):** Demonstration of understanding key concepts such as cultural dimensions (e.g., Hofstede's model), high-context vs. low-context cultures, and their implications for communication and negotiation. Clarity in explaining how cultural differences affect non-verbal communication and etiquette in business interactions.
3. **Analysis and Application (20%):** Critical analysis of how cultural factors influence negotiation strategies, decision-making processes, and outcomes in international business contexts. Application of theoretical knowledge to interpret real-world examples or case studies of successful and unsuccessful cross-cultural negotiations.
4. **Presentation Quality (15%):** Content Organization: Logical structure and coherence of the presentation, including introduction, main points, and conclusion / Visual Aids: Effective use of visuals (e.g., charts, graphs, images) to support key points and enhance understanding / Engagement: Engagement with the audience through clear delivery, eye contact, and enthusiasm.
5. **Practical Recommendations (15%):** Identification and presentation of practical recommendations for improving cross-cultural communication and negotiation skills in global business environments. Creativity and feasibility of proposed strategies based on research findings and case study analyses.
6. **Peer Evaluation and Collaboration (15%):** Contribution to group dynamics and collaboration demonstrated through teamwork, division of tasks, and effective communication within the group. Peer evaluation of individual contributions, including participation in discussions, research efforts, and preparation for presentations.

Additional Considerations:

Accuracy and Citations: Ensure proper citations and references are used throughout the research report and presentation.

Originality and Insight: Offer unique perspectives or insights based on the research findings and critical analysis.

Additional Information on Case Studies

1. **Case Study 1 - Toyota Motor Corporation:** Toyota is renowned for its excellence in lean manufacturing and operational efficiency. Discuss Toyota's production system (TPS), which emphasizes continuous improvement (kaizen), waste reduction, and just-in-time manufacturing. Explore how Toyota's approach to quality control and employee

involvement has shaped its global success and competitive advantage in the automotive industry.

2. **Case Study 2 – Sony Corporation:** Sony Corporation is known for innovation in electronics, entertainment, and gaming. Examine Sony's history of innovation, including the development of the Walkman, PlayStation, and other groundbreaking products. Discuss how Sony's corporate culture fosters creativity, research and development, and global marketing strategies. Analyze challenges faced by Sony, such as competition in the tech industry and adapting to digital trends.
3. **Case Study 3 - SoftBank Group Corporation:** SoftBank is a Japanese multinational conglomerate known for its investments in technology, telecommunications, and finance sectors worldwide. Explore SoftBank Corporation as a case study in Japanese business innovation and global strategy. Analyze SoftBank's evolution from a telecommunications company to a powerhouse in technology investment and innovation. Examine key strategic moves, such as the Vision Fund, and their impact on the company's growth and influence in global markets. Discuss challenges faced by SoftBank, its approach to risk-taking, and the broader implications for the technology and investment sectors.
4. **Case Study 4 - Recruit Co., Ltd.:** Recruit Co., Ltd. is a prominent Japanese company recognized for its diverse portfolio in human resources, advertising, and staffing services, with a significant influence on Japan's business landscape and beyond. Explore its evolution from a local advertising and staffing firm to a global leader in human resources solutions and technology-driven recruitment services. Analyze Recruit's strategic expansions, technological advancements, and their impact on reshaping industry norms and practices in Japan and internationally.