

Understanding the “Untapped Resource” of Local, Non-native Japanese Speakers

Examples of tasks performed by local Kakehashi with Japanese language and/or cultural experience

Language Levels

B = Basic

I = Intermediate

A = Advanced

Informal Interpreting/Translating Support (All departments)

- Type: emails, presentations, meetings, video conferences (I, A)

Note: think of the Kakehashi more as a “communicator” than an interpreter/translator.

Administration

- proofreading English business correspondence written by Japanese supervisors (B)
- creating international and domestic travel schedules (B)
- being a point-of-contact with the other Group Companies (B)
- translating/localizing material from Japanese headquarters for local employees (B, I)
- supporting Japanese and local executives via informal interpreting/translating (I)
- being a sounding board for Japanese executives/expats in the US (I)
- bilingual phone support (I)
- minute-taking at meetings and sharing key information (I)
- translation of confidential corporate documents (A)

Human Resources

Japanese expatriates:

- research and arrangement of living conditions (B)
- schools for children (B)
- vehicle support: purchase/lease, driver’s license application, driving support (B)
- shopping support (B)
- arrangement of bilingual publications and expat memberships (B)
- visa support (I)
- expat questions (I)
- doctors’ visits (A)
- expat employee reviews (A)

American expatriates to Japan:

- Japanese language learning (B)
- orientations on living in Japan (B)
- research and arrangement of living conditions (I)
- schools for children (I)

Accounting

- translation of documents (I)
- interpretation during meetings and video conferences (A)

IT

- communication with headquarters on a common IT system (I)

Engineering

- translation of technical drawings (I)
- language support for Japanese employees visiting the US for short-term technical meetings (I)

Travel Support

- booking flights, hotels and domestic transportation (B)
- orienting employees on the Japan map and train schedules (B)
- travel advice and food / travel recommendations (B)

Japan Business Trips

- in-person liaison work on behalf of local US departments that want a particular message explained in person to their Japanese counterpart (A)
- Group Company management meeting conference interpreting (A)

Group Company Support

- Group Company global “committees” and group projects (I, A)

Interns (short-term/temporary project support)

- translation support (emails, corporate documents, presentations)
- expat support (driving practice, utilities, car support, travel guides)
- event organization (Japan-related, other)
- other support of tasks that the full-time bilingual employees need support with (*this also allows the full-time employees to have some “management” experience*)