

# TOEIC® Newsletter

## TOEIC® Scores for New Recruits in FY2010

— Digest Version —

[Special Feature]

### Amidst the recession, this year saw fewer people take TOEIC® tests but average score reaches record high of 485

The FY2010 TOEIC scores for new recruits hired straight out of university have been released. Reflecting the tough economic conditions, employers are becoming increasingly selective about who they hire. This has led in FY2010 to a year-on-year decline in the number of examinees and companies adopting the TOEIC test, decreasing to 34,578 examinees and 808 companies, respectively. In a more positive development, the average score rose by 25 points compared to FY2009, reaching a record high of 485.

In this issue, we take a look at this year's trends and scores, based on the data concerning new recruits hired in FY2010.

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The TOEIC® Newsletter is published quarterly by the Institute for International Business Communication (IIBC) in Japanese. It features how the TOEIC program is used effectively within companies, universities and other institutions. We offer the latest case studies of TOEIC program usage to our clients, so they can take full advantage of the TOEIC program within their organization. In this journal, we also introduce a trend of global human resources development and the globalization movement in Japan.

This issue is a summary of the TOEIC Newsletter—TOEIC Scores for New Recruits in FY2010—(issued: August 2010) translated into English by IIBC for its readers around the world.

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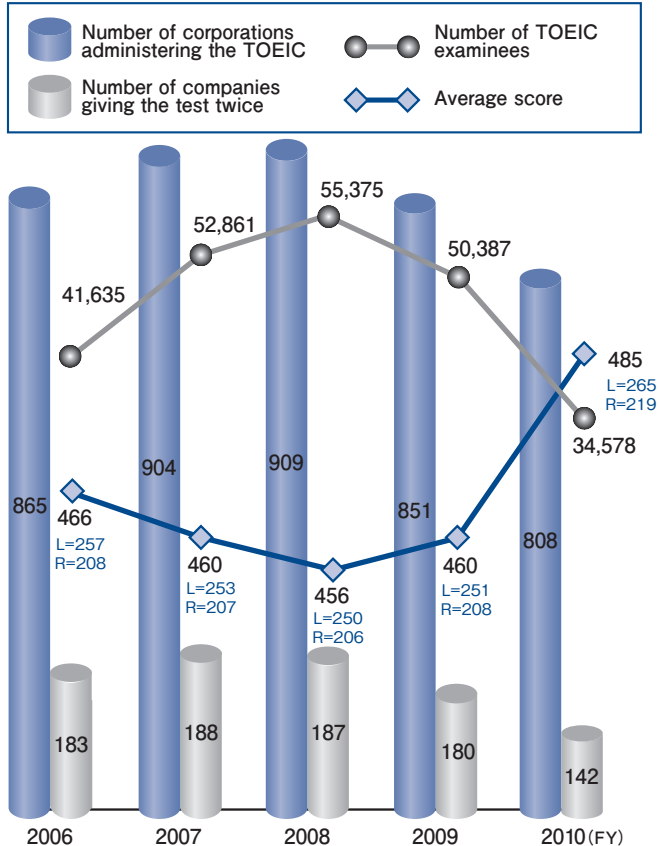
## How to interpret the data

The data on newly hired university graduates in FY 2010, included in the appendices on pages 2 and 3, are a tabulation of the TOEIC results at companies that administered the TOEIC test between October 1 and December 31, 2009 (for students promised employment) and between April 1 and June 30, 2010 (for newly-hired employees). These results were used because it is reasonable to assume that many of the test-takers for those time periods are newly hired workers.

In Figure 1, the heading “Companies giving the test twice” indicates those companies that administered the TOEIC test to newly hired employees during both of the abovementioned time periods in the same fiscal year.

The codes in Figures 1-3 are as follows: L = Listening, R = Reading, T = Total. Average scores are listed for each category. The code “C” indicates Level C or higher (i.e., the number of examinees with TOEIC score of 470 or higher according to the Proficiency Scale established by the TOEIC Steering Committee). Level C indicates that an individual “has sufficient knowledge for daily activities and conducting business, within certain limits.” The symbol % indicates the ratio of examinees at Level C or higher to the overall number of test-takers.

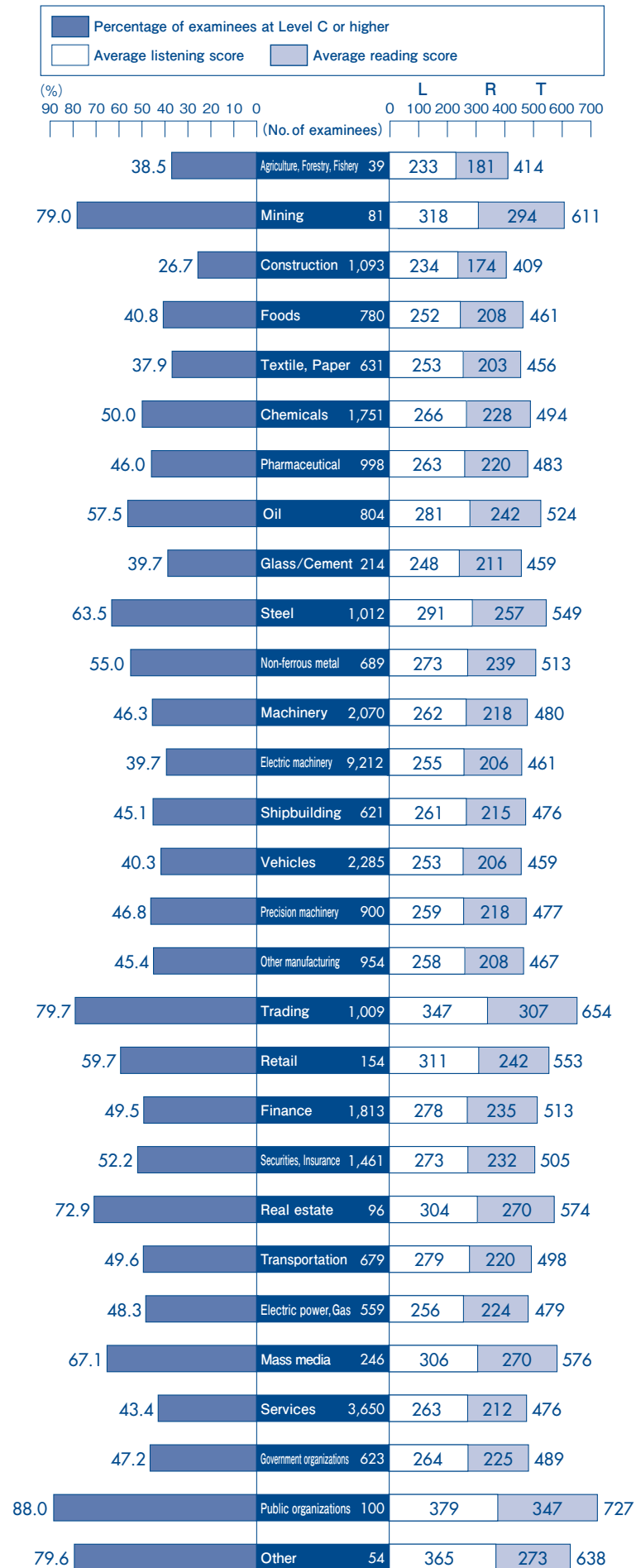
**[Figure 1]** Changes in the number of TOEIC® examinees and the number of companies administering the TOEIC® test



**[Figure 2]** Score comparison between manufacturing and non-manufacturing industries

Industry	No. of examinees	L	R	T	C	%
Manufacturing	24,134	259	213	472	10,500	43.5
Non-manufacturing	10,444	280	234	514	5,407	51.8

**[Figure 3]** Average scores for each industry and proportion of examinees at Level C or higher



## Trends for this fiscal year and score fluctuation

In FY2010, 808 companies adopted the TOEIC tests for new recruits, with a total of 34,578 examinees. Both of these figures represent a decrease from FY2009. The statistical decline may have been the result of the trend among employers, amidst the economic recession, to hire fewer new employees and spend less on recruiting and training.

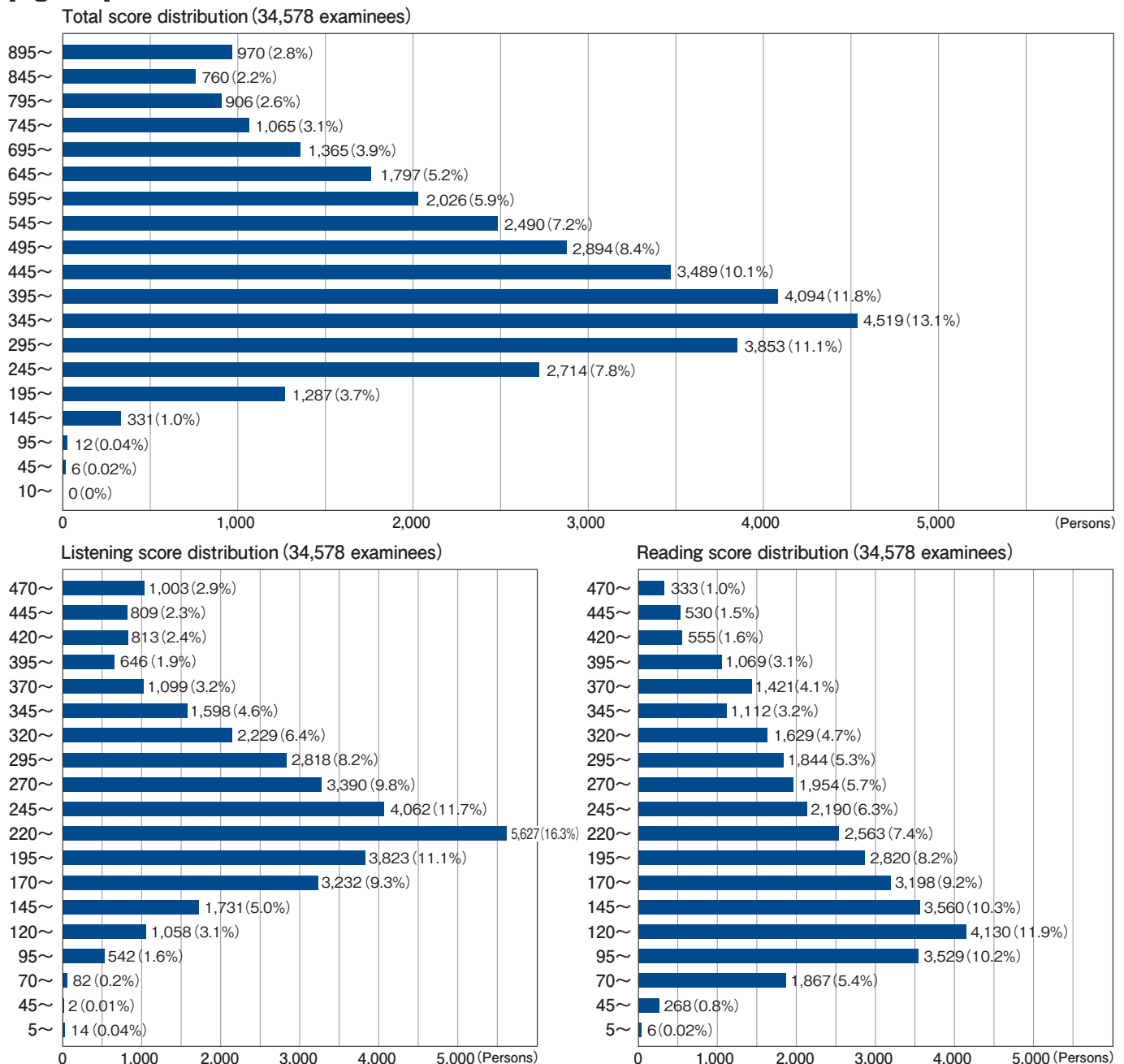
Meanwhile, the average score increased by 25 points over the previous year to a record high of 485 (listening score:265, reading score:219); and 46 percent of all test takers were ranked level C or above, compared to 40.3 percent in FY2009. The average score rose compared to the previous year in almost all industry sectors. Indeed, there is a continuing long-term trend (see page 4) towards higher average scores among new employees, indicating a general

improvement in English ability.

The steady trend towards globalization has made English skills more and more important. Employers are increasingly trying to make their new employees and students promised employment aware of the need for English skills by having them take TOEIC test and encouraging them to learn the language. Meanwhile, universities are aiming to help foster a globally minded workforce by bolstering their English curricula and striving to raise awareness among students of the need to improve their skills.

Companies will surely continue to require that new employees have a high level of English skills in addition to other skills necessary for potential staff.

[Figure 4] Score distribution



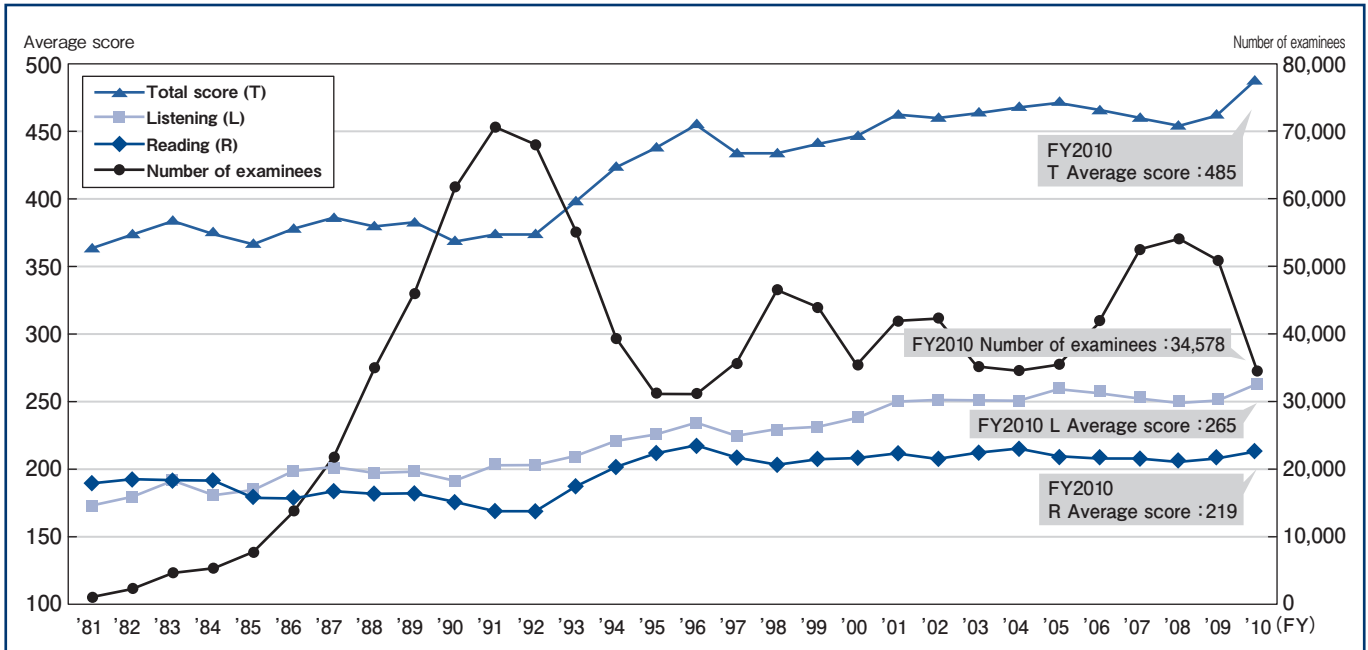
\*The figures listed as "total scores" are actual values, not a simple addition of the listening and reading scores.

\*The percentages listed (pp.2-6) are rounded to the first decimal place.

# Data analysis: Utilization of the TOEIC® test

In this section, we will go over the “Surveys on the Use of English in Japanese Corporations and Schools, 2009” and “DATA & ANALYSIS 2009” to see how companies, organizations, and educational institutions are utilizing the TOEIC test.

## Number of new employee examinees taking the TOEIC IP test and average scores (FY1981-FY2010)

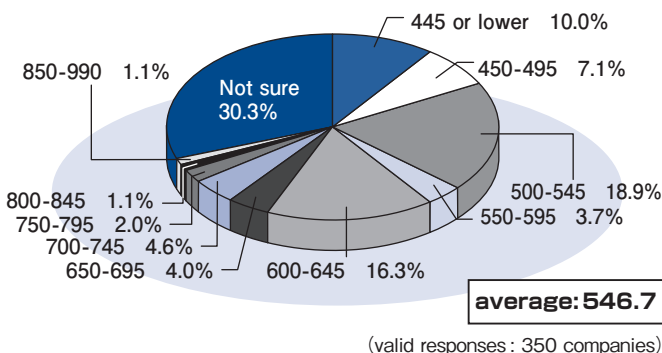


The awareness of the importance of English skills has increased along with the advance of globalization. The number of companies adopting TOEIC test, accordingly the number of test takers, rose rapidly since 1986 and the number of test takers peaked in 1991. Since then, changes in the economic climate led to the trend towards companies hiring fewer new recruits, which led to a decline in the number of test takers. Since the mid-1990s, the number of test takers has repeatedly risen and fallen in line with the state of the economy.

Businesses have been trying to cut training costs while at the same time placing an increased emphasis on the English capabilities of their new employees in order to adapt to rapid globalization. Universities are attempting to help meet this need by investing considerable effort in their English instruction, with a focus on fostering communicative ability. As a result, the average TOEIC score for new employees in FY2010 was more than 100 points greater than in FY1981, reaching the record high of 485.

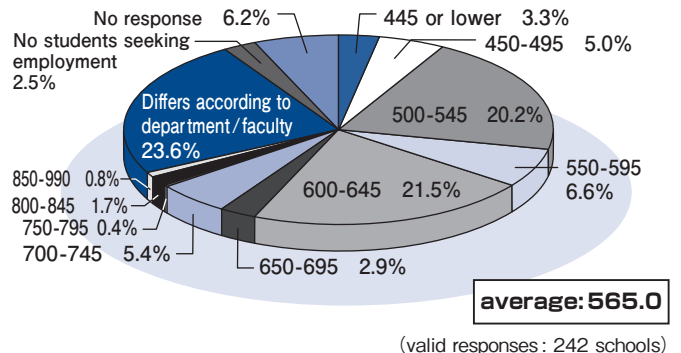
### Expected scores of new recruits ※1

Q.What is the expected score of new recruits?



### Expected scores of students for career-related purposes ※1

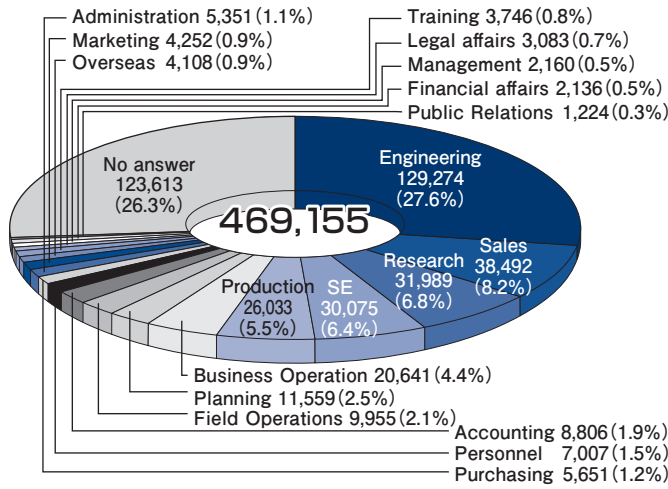
Q.What level of TOEIC score is expected for students seeking employment?



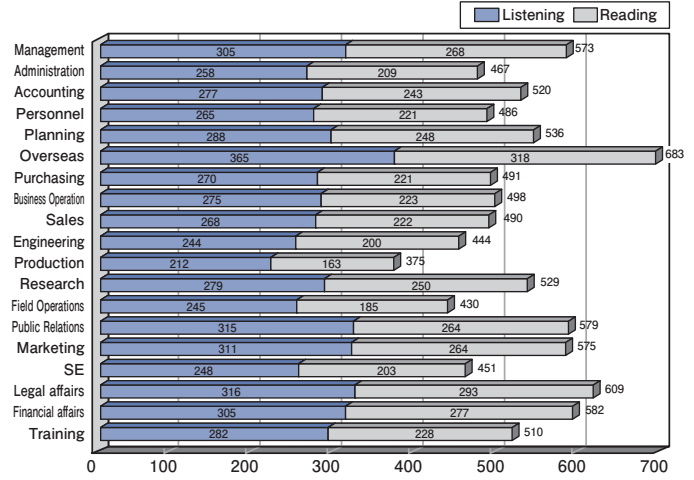
# IP test data in FY2009 (companies and organizations)

## TOEIC® test

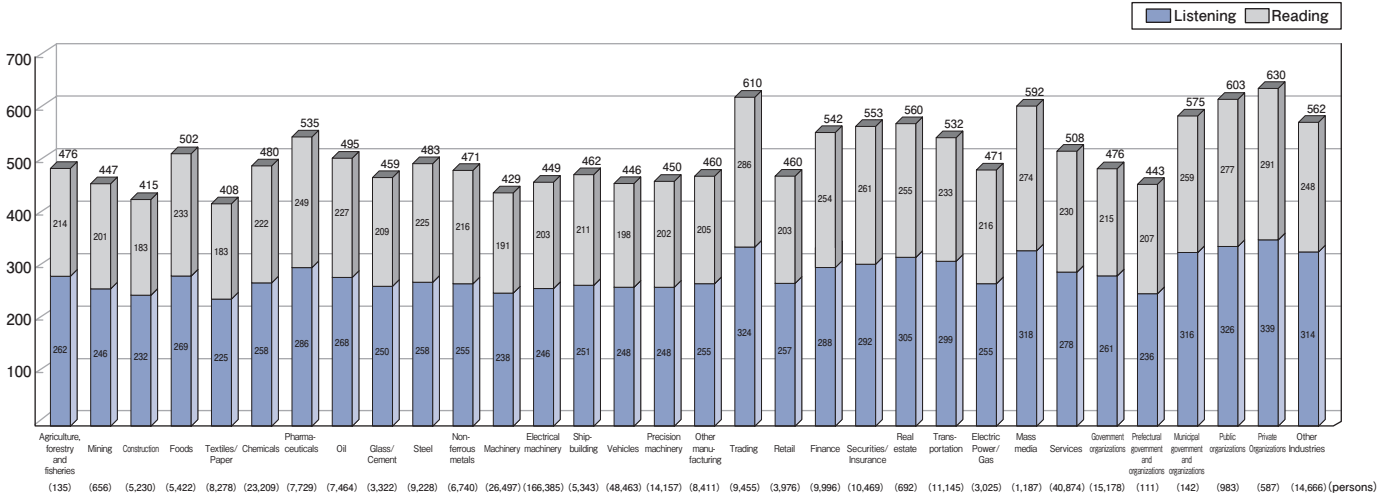
Number of examinees by type of occupation ※2



Average scores by type of occupation ※2



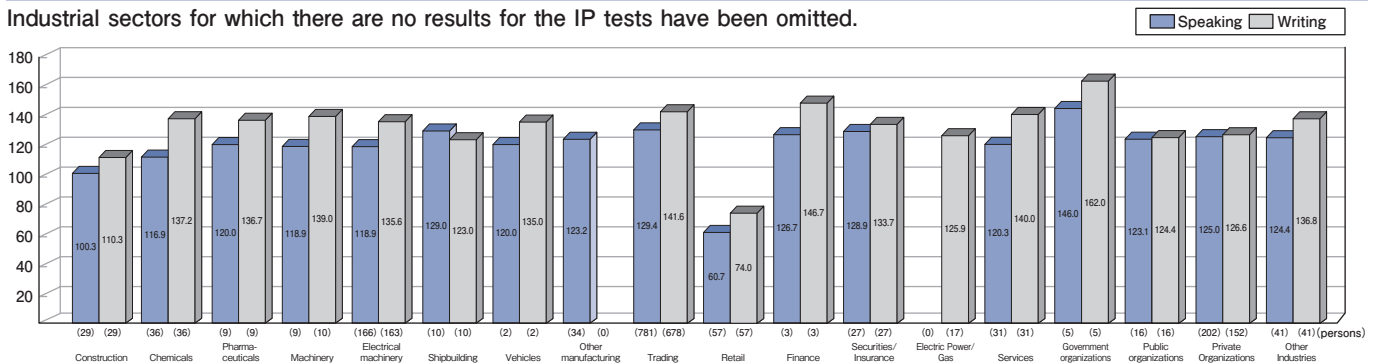
Number of examinees and average scores by industry ※2



## TOEIC® Speaking and Writing tests

Number of examinees and average scores by industry ※2

Industrial sectors for which there are no results for the IP tests have been omitted.



※1 Source: "Surveys on the Use of English in Japanese Corporations and Schools, 2009"  
 "Surveys on the Use of English in Japanese Corporations and Schools, 2009" is a report on three surveys: "Survey on the Use of English & English Tests in Japanese Companies and Organizations," "Survey on the Use of English & English Tests in Overseas Japanese Companies" and "Survey on English Education in Japanese Schools." (Available only in Japanese.)

※2 Source: "TOEIC TEST DATA & ANALYSIS 2009," "TOEIC SPEAKING AND WRITING TESTS DATA & ANALYSIS 2009"  
 The "DATA & ANALYSIS" presents the data from the Secure Program (SP) and Institutional Program (IP) tests each year.

These documents are available on the official TOEIC website (<http://www.toeic.or.jp/>).

# Survey of English Speaking & Writing Skills at Listed Companies

## — Oral communication is increasingly important —

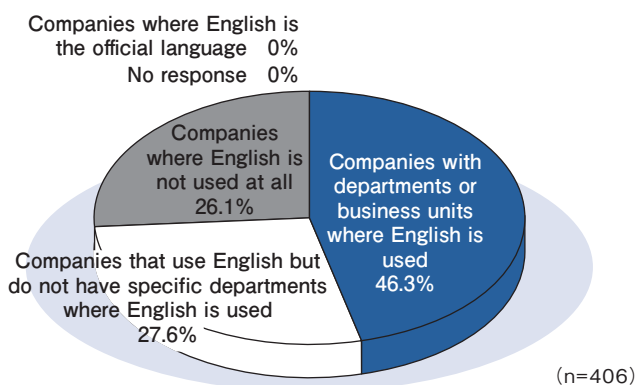
In January 2010, the Institute for International Business Communication (IIBC) conducted its Survey of English Speaking & Writing Skills at Listed Companies. The survey involved 3,747 stock exchange companies in Japan.

The following is an overview of the results.

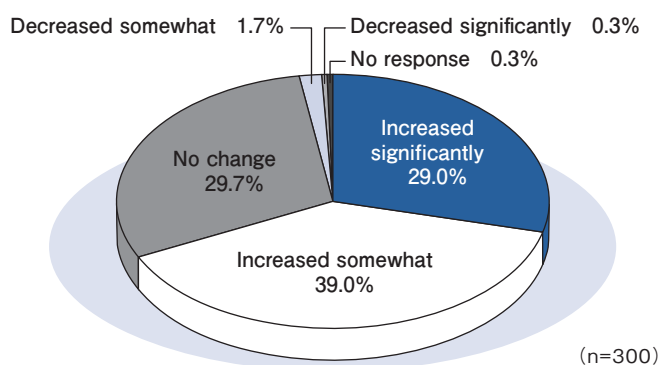
### Survey overview

Target: All companies in Japan listed on domestic stock exchanges (3,747 companies)  
 Format: Questionnaire forms sent by mail  
 Period: January 2010  
 Valid responses: 406 companies (including 300 that use English in their business activities)

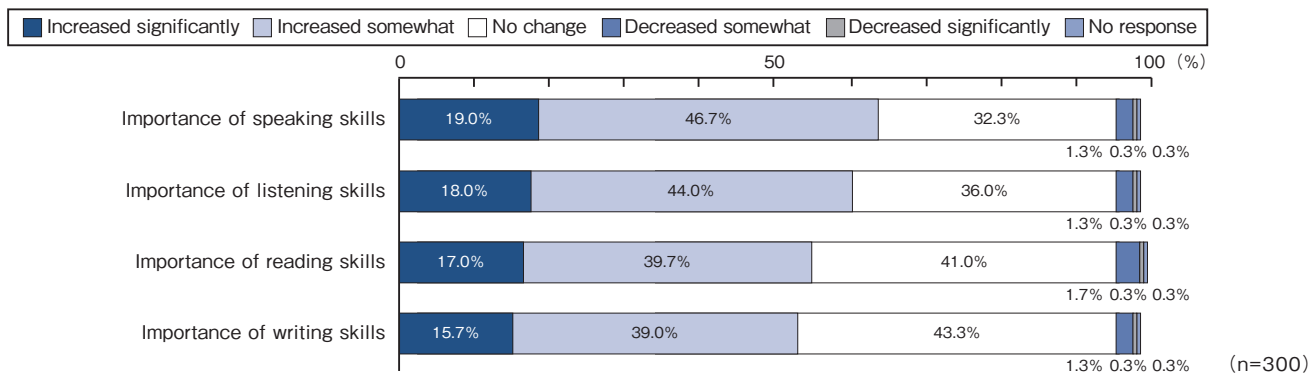
### English use at responding companies



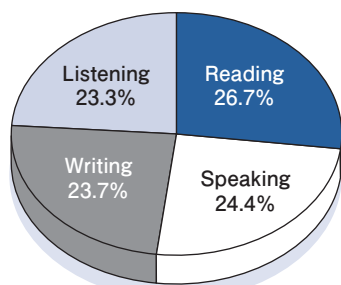
### Importance of English at the company over the past five years



### Importance of the four English skills over the past five years



### Comparative frequency of use of the four skills in departments where English is used



\*Figures are mean numbers, and therefore do not necessarily add up to 100 percent.

### TOEIC Speaking and Writing test scores required for practical English communication situations

TOEIC Speaking scores	TOEIC Writing scores	Departments where this level of English is required
160	160	Overseas departments
140	140	Sales departments
140	140	Employees posted overseas
130	120	Engineering departments
90	90	New employees

Details regarding this survey are available at the official TOEIC Speaking and Writing tests website (<http://www.toeic.or.jp/sw/data/>). \* Available only in Japanese.

[Interview]

# Aiming to be No.1 in Asia; English skills more important after joining Star Alliance Network

All Nippon Airways Co., Ltd.

All Nippon Airways Co., Ltd. (ANA) is perennially one of the companies that students would most like to work for and a constant presence at the top of surveys ranking the popularity of companies as employers. We asked Tatsuya Endo, director of Human Resources Management at ANA and director of the ANA JINZAI University, about the kind of person that ANA is looking to hire, as well as the required levels of English ability and training at the company.

**ANA seeks innovative employees who are customer orientated and have strong personal attributes; Interview-focused hiring process leads to a diverse workforce**

——— What kind of person is ANA looking to hire?

The “ideal person” differs from job to job, but there are three common traits we look for: being customer orientated, having strong personal attributes, and the capability of achieving innovation.

Customer orientation is the most fundamental aspect of work. We are looking for new employees with the presence of mind to go beyond what’s stipulated in a company manual to offer customers the best possible experience by thinking about what customers need and then providing it to them.

Operating ANA requires a great deal of cooperation among the staff of the many companies and departments that make up the ANA Group. This means that our employees need to have sufficiently strong personal attributes to be a part of the team at ANA, including communication skills, decision-making abilities, and a global mindset.

What’s more, the airline industry is constantly changing, and we need people with the resilience to help ANA undertake ever greater challenges and who are able to come up with innovative ways to ensure people choose to fly with ANA, without being bound by the status quo.

——— What is the hiring process?

We place a considerable emphasis on interviews in our hiring process. The number of interviews depends on the particular job position, but an applicant can expect to be interviewed three or four times.

We spend so much time on interviews to not only gauge the students’ personalities and attributes but also for the applicants to get a feel for the atmosphere of the company. After all, the successful applicant will presumably work with us for a long time, so it is important that they join the team satisfied that it is a good match, and that we can decide whether or not each applicant is the kind of person we want to work and cooperate with to surmount the many job-related challenges we will face together.

——— ANA’s recruiting method is unique. Instead of normal cookie-cutter employment application forms, you have incorporated interviews that take the form of promotional presentations. Why did the company adopt this sort of policy?

Holding a by-the-numbers interview in a stuffy setting is no way for a company to gauge what a person is really like. Our aim is to increase forums for communication that allow us to get an idea of an applicant’s personality.

Similarly, with the application forms, cookie-cutter forms tend to elicit only uniform types



**Tatsuya Endo**  
Director  
Human Resources Management  
ANA JINZAI University  
All Nippon Airways Co., Ltd.

of information, so we have tried to give applicants more opportunities to show us what they are really like. This year, the cover sheet of the application form was almost blank, and we asked applicants to use the white space to express themselves. We also scrapped the requirements for passport-type photographs, and had applicants submit photos that they thought showed them at their best. We use the interview forms as a launch pad for better communication so that we can gauge the strength of a candidate's personal attributes, including whether or not they are likely to be able to negotiate and adapt in a team setting, and also get an idea of how unique and appealing his or her personality is.

Hiring just the same kind of people will not lead to the generation of new ideas, so we have tried to hire a diverse range of individuals. Thus, not all our new employees are, as some may believe, people returning from living or studying overseas or those who have participated in overseas volunteer projects. Indeed, some of them have never left Japan.

**ANA rates applicants on efforts to learn English and an awareness of its importance; Students provisionally promised employment take the TOEIC test**

—— How is English ability positioned within the hiring process?

English is not only the language used when dealing with foreign customers. It is also necessary for such areas as aircraft maintenance manuals and contracts for using overseas airports. Moreover, since 1999, when ANA joined Star Alliance, a cooperative network of airlines from around the world, the need

for English speakers has grown throughout the company.

This has meant that English skills are necessary when working at ANA, and our application forms now have a space for applicants to fill in their TOEIC scores. We are looking for a score of at least 600 points.

In recent years, we have come across students with very high TOEIC scores—some in the 800s and 900s. Outstanding scores are laudable of course, but applicants with low TOEIC scores are not ruled out as potential employees. Those whose English ability is not sufficiently high at the time of application are asked about how willing they are to make an effort to learn the language. We prefer that applicants are aware of the importance of English, and that they at least do something to measure their skill level, like taking the TOEIC test.

—— Students ANA has promised employment take the TOEIC test. What role does the TOEIC test play in the time between provisional appointment and official hiring?

In our line of work, a lack of English skills will hinder your ability to do your job properly, so we prefer that people improve their English before they begin working for us. To that end, students we have promised employment take the TOEIC test in October as a way to find out their true level of English ability and motivate them to study hard to raise their score before they begin work.

We encourage students promised employment to take a correspondence study course. The course is not compulsory, but we do have a target TOEIC score of 600 and even require that those who have already achieved that score to continue improving their English skills.

**TOEIC scores used as criteria for promotions to managerial positions**

—— What does new employee training involve?

It depends on the job, but generally new employee training is conducted in March prior to the company orientation. Over a period of four days, the new recruits learn about the mindset required of members of the workforce, as well as basic business behavior.

The company orientation is held on April 1, followed by new employee training in specialized skills for their assigned departments. Each new employee learns about the expert knowledge their job requires. For some jobs, this knowledge includes English ability. For instance, cabin crew and service staff learn how to provide customer service in English, while maintenance employees learn how to use manuals written in English.

### —— If English is an indispensable skill, how does ANA go about improving employees' English after they have joined the company?

Basically, we encourage self-study. However, we offer support by providing information on distance learning courses and language schools, and we reimburse some of the expenses involved after the employee has completed a course. Courses aimed at preparation for the TOEIC test are offered as well, and many of our employees take advantage of them.

We also offer extra learning opportunities in the form of in-house "open seminars." The seminars are held on holidays and employees must pay to participate. The diverse array of seminars includes those that aim to develop participants' English communication and business writing skills. Even though the seminars are not free, they are very popular. Sometimes demand exceeds capacity and we have to choose participants by a lottery.

In general, our employees use this system to build up their English skills, and then polish those abilities on the job.

### —— How does ANA use the TOEIC test?

We use the TOEIC test as a way to assist employees' own efforts to learn English. The TOEIC scores are used as criteria for some aspects of our human resource structure. For instance, we have the Challenge System, which allows employees to apply for promotion to management positions if they have a TOEIC score of at least 600.

TOEIC scores are also required for certain training courses. If a cabin attendant wants to undergo training to become a chief purser on international routes, he or she needs to have a certain TOEIC score, which varies depending on the particular training program.

In light of this, we feel employees should

have frequent opportunities to take the TOEIC test. Therefore, we give the TOEIC test around four times a year, June, August, October and December in six locations, Chitose, Narita, Tokyo, Itami, Kansai International Airport, and Fukuoka. The number of TOEIC test administered reaches a total of 80 times.

### —— What is ANA doing to develop its global workforce?

We expect that international operations will make up around seventy percent of our total business if we include passenger services and cargo operations in the calculation. This means that the development of a global workforce is one of our vital tasks.

To that end, we have established what we call the Global Business Workforce System, aimed at promptly developing a workforce with the skills and determination to ensure the success of our international business. It is voluntary to join and open to ANA employees of all occupations who have been with the company for at least three years. Those who wish to sign up to participate in the system must have a TOEIC score of at least 600.

We also have a one-year overseas OJT system for mid-level employees in main career-track positions and in ground-staff positions. Under the system, we post 20 to 30 people overseas each year.

### —— As a company that requires globally capable employees, what skills other than English are basic requirements for prospective employees?

We place a great emphasis on the unique experiences attained through devotion to some kind of activity. It can be anything—whether academic study, sports, or something else. People who have made a determined effort to achieve something are more likely to have the ability to find a way to progress in an environment that is highly subject to change.

People who can talk honestly and with confidence about how their experiences changed them are much more attractive than those who just give a list of things they did. So we encourage students to gain such experiences during their time at school.

[Interview]

# Amidst global expansion, new employees receive English conversation training at an early stage

Daikin Industries, Ltd.

Daikin Industries, Ltd. is rapidly expanding its business overseas. What efforts is the company making to improve employees' English skills and what kind of personnel is the company looking to recruit? To find out more about the Daikin's human development and hiring systems, which have earned it high praise from all quarters, we spoke to Toru Yahata, manager of the Human Resources Division Recruitment Group at Daikin Industries, Tatsuhito Yamada, the leader of Daikin Fukushi Service's Business Support Department ESC Group (responsible for language training for Daikin's employees), Kyoko Watanabe, who works for the same group, and full-time language instructors Janice Baptiste and Lee Blois.

**New employee training includes a five-day total-immersion course in functional English for business situations**

—— Start by telling us about Daikin's training for new employees.

**Yahata:** The duration of entry-level training for new employees differs from year to year, but it generally lasts around one month. Our training has two major objectives. First, we aim to help new employees make the mental transition from students to working adults. We bring in instructors from outside the company to foster the appropriate mindset among trainees by teaching them fundamental norms and methods related to working life. Our second goal is to help the trainees become true "Daikin people." They not only learn about the company's business and tour our factories, but also participate in a five-night, six-day training camp together with corporate officers—right up to the chairman—to deepen their understanding of

Daikin's history and corporate philosophy.

English conversation courses are also a part of our training regime because we see English as a necessary skill not only for those who wish to be part of a global company like Daikin, but also for adult members of modern society in general. Daikin introduced English conversation courses into its training 26 years ago when our international business activities were centered on exports, based on our expectation that English would become increasingly important in the coming years. The methods used and duration of the English conversation training has changed since that time, however. This year, English conversation instruction lasted five days, but English is still a major feature of our training structure.

—— Why did Daikin decide to devote five days out of a training period of around one month to English conversation?

**Yahata:** The company has globalized rapidly over the past dozen or so years. In FY2009, overseas business accounted for 62 percent of our overall business and we think that will rise to around 80 percent or even more in the future. This, in turn, will surely lead to an increase in the volume of work involving foreign languages, and English in particular. For instance, more Japanese employees will be posted to overseas production sites and more Daikin Group employees overseas will come to Japan for training, all of which will require people to communicate in English.

In light of this, we need our new recruits to be aware of the fact that the company they have joined is very global in nature, and that they need to make an effort to learn English. Thus, we provide English conversation training for all new employees as a way to remind them of the need to improve their English skills.



**Toru Yahata**  
Manager  
Recruitment Group  
Human Resources Division  
Daikin Industries, Ltd.



**Tatsuhito Yamada**  
Leader  
ESC Group  
Business Support  
Department  
Daikin Fukushi Service  
Co., Ltd.

Also, some of our new employees have never interacted with non-Japanese before, so the English training is also intended to remove any resistance they may feel.

### —— What is the English conversation training process?

**Yamada:** We start by administering the TOEIC test in April, and dividing trainees into ability-based classes in accordance with the test results. This year we had eight classes.

We have original textbooks and classes are conducted by instructors who are native speakers of English in order for trainees to learn the kind of English they will actually encounter in the workplace.

Once training is complete, the instructors assess each trainee through an interview, gauging their English speaking ability according to our 14-grade scale. The TOEIC scores and speaking ability grade of the trainees are added to the range of information used to decide where to assign them.

### —— What are classes like?

**Blois:** Trainees are grouped according to ability, and each class consists of around ten people. We have different textbooks for elementary level trainees and for those at intermediate and advanced levels, but the core curriculum remains the same, with all levels including the type of language that Daikin employees are likely to encounter in the workplace. Trainees in the elementary level classes concentrate on vocabulary and common situational phrases, while those at the higher levels learn how to

convert those words and phrases into their own expressions and add pertinent information.

For all of the class levels, we also concentrate on developing the ability to deliver speeches as there are many situations where this skill will become necessary. For instance, mechanical engineers often have to offer English presentations of their research at international conferences and the like, so we teach them how to construct a speech, make a formal presentation, and answer audience questions accordingly.

**Baptiste:** I usually teach the highest class with TOEIC scores of 800-900. At this level, many of the trainees have a certain degree of confidence in their English ability so I expect more of them. I incorporate aspects other than the textbook material in my classes. For instance, we start each day with a group discussion of current events. I also like to use the ‘deep-end’ technique. I may give the trainees a task to describe a product in detail, or set up a meeting with a customer before providing them with the appropriate vocabulary. This encourages them to make an effort to create language by themselves, but it also makes them aware of their lack of ability to handle business tasks in English.

### —— How do you tweak your teaching methods to keep the trainees motivated?

**Blois:** As the day is an intensive 7.5 hours of study time, I like to offer the students an array of enjoyable activities to supplement the core content. I offer them ample opportunity for work associated discussion, interactive role-play activities, and industry related vocabulary building exercises, while



**Kyoko Watanabe**  
ESC Group  
Business Support  
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Daikin Fukushi Service  
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**Janice Baptiste**  
Full-time language  
instructor  
Daikin Fukushi Service  
Co., Ltd.

still maintaining focus on the core content of the course.

**Baptiste:** Some students in the elementary level classes don't like English, and went through school believing that English was in no way relevant to them. I try to remove that resistance to English by structuring my classes to provide a nurturing environment so that the trainees can appreciate even small improvements in their ability and feel they are developing an understanding of the language.

#### —— Is there a noticeable change in new employees' attitudes after completing training?

**Watanabe:** Since our instruction method varies depending on the class level, employees at all skill levels are eager to continue studying English.

Many of those at the advanced level are good at English to begin with and you can see at the outset that they are confident. But as they progress through training they realize that their current English abilities are not sufficient in a business setting, and this gives way to determination to study further. Conversely, the trainees at the elementary level tend to dislike English, and initially just sit there looking down at their desks. Gradually, though, they discover that English can be fun, and develop a more positive attitude towards learning the language.

It is important that we motivate our employees to learn English. To that end, trainees are asked to fill out a questionnaire each year at the end of the course. We try to use that feedback to fine-tune our textbooks and adjust the curriculum.

### Daikin encourages self-study and offers TOEIC test to assist employees' English learning

#### —— How does Daikin go about improving employees' English skills after the initial training?

**Yamada:** Basically, apart from those who urgently need remedial work, we encourage self-study. We are happy to provide support for the self-study sessions held after business hours by calling in full-time instructors if there are enough takers so that employees can study at their nearest Daikin office or plant. Also, we offer financial assistance for employees who score 500 or higher on the TOEIC test to attend classes at an English school. Under this scheme, once the employee completes the prescribed course, Daikin reimburses half of the tuition costs.

Daikin also assists employees' English learning by holding the TOEIC test in-house twice a year, one of which is paid for by the company. The company believes that improving the English skills of its employees is a crucial task given the rapid globalization taking place today, so a target TOEIC score of 500 for all employees has been set.

In addition to providing support for self-study, Daikin also recognizes the need to provide remedial assistance for those who are struggling with English. For such employees the company provides English classes with content specific to certain occupations and tasks—as well as lessons geared to a specific department if the department makes that request.



**Lee Blois**  
Full-time language  
instructor  
Daikin Fukushi Service  
Co., Ltd.



New employees take English conversation classes

**Yahata:** We have had full-time native English instructors at Daikin for more than twenty years now. The fact that we have our own instructors working full-time is one of the company's unique strengths. This enables us to provide programs tailored more closely to our needs than anything an outside training institution could offer.

—— **Apart from developing English skills, what else is Daikin working on to create a globally minded workforce?**

**Yahata:** With the global expansion of the scope of our business, our top priority now is to parlay the technologies and expertise developed here in Japan into high-impact brands overseas.

With that in mind, we established a one-year Bridge Person Development Program in 2008, aimed at fostering a team of employees able to bridge the gap between the various Daikin Industries departments here in Japan and our overseas group companies. The course strengthens the trainees' communication skills and also reacquaints them with the Daikin corporate philosophy to further their understanding of its underlying outlook. It also fosters their ability to interact in English with colleagues in the Daikin Group, who come from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds, using their own words rather than just stock phrases. The period from the establishment of the course up to FY2010 has been strategically important for Daikin. During that time, 16 to 20 people have participated in the course each year.

We also have a two-year overseas training system, although it has been temporarily suspended. This program is typical of Daikin in that it is up to

prospective participants to consider what they have to offer Daikin's business sites overseas, decide on their own training location and curriculum, and then achieve the goals they set for themselves. So far, about 100 employees have completed this overseas training.

Similarly, we have around 350 Japanese employees working overseas. In addition to the English conversation training they receive prior to an overseas posting, these employees are also trained in intercultural communication skills and learn about topics specific to the region where they will be working, such as local business practices and management philosophies.

**Emphasis on interviews helps identify proactive people who relish the challenge of the unknown**

—— **What kind of person is Daikin looking to hire among new graduates?**

**Yahata:** Our industry, manufacturing, is all about taking the wisdom built up over the years and using it to make ever-better products. Without doing this, the business cannot evolve. To that end, we need people who not only possess technical skills and expertise, but also have a passion for discovering new things through their work and taking on the challenge of the unknown.

When hiring new graduates, Daikin places a major emphasis on interviews. We seek to ascertain whether or not the views of a candidate are in harmony with our business and future direction, and also suit our corporate philosophy and culture. We

want to know if that person will fit in as a member of our team and can work together with the rest of us. At the same time, we live in an age of rapid change, where the unexpected can happen at any time, so we are looking for people who stand out—innovators who are not bound by the status quo.

—— How does Daikin assess English ability?

**Yahata:** With globalization advancing so rapidly, there is no question that English is a vital skill these days. However, we have intentionally resisted setting a target for English ability in our hiring process, preferring instead to focus on the attributes I just mentioned.

Having said that, when we hire someone specifically for a position that requires the immediate use of English skills, we look to overseas recruiting

fairs and include our native English instructors in the interview process so that we can gauge the candidates' English skills along the way.

—— What message do you have for students who are thinking of applying for work for Daikin in terms of the skills they should acquire at university?

**Yahata:** When it comes to work, the ability to sense when something needs to be done and to act on it is more important than mere knowledge and skills. I encourage students to get as broad a range of experience as possible—whether it is overseas travel, dedication to hobbies, or something else—so as to broaden their horizons and sharpen their sensitivity to unspoken messages.



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