



## **Living to work: the cost of Japan's strong work ethic**

### **Lead-in**

1. Is there a strong work ethic in your country? Where does the work ethic stem from?
2. Do you think you have a good work-life balance? Do you ever feel you're putting in more hours at work than you should?

### **Video**

Watch a video about Japan's work ethic and answer the questions.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Y-YJEtXHeo>



1. What do nearly a quarter of Japanese companies do?
2. What is the salaryman?
3. How much time off are Japanese workers entitled to? How much of their holiday entitlement do they use on average?
4. What did the reporter notice while walking around Tokyo at 3 a.m.?
5. In Japan, the success of a company as a whole is more important than\_\_\_\_\_.
6. What do 63% of Japanese people feel guilty about?
7. How do the long working hours affect productivity?
8. What is karoshi?
9. What's Dentsu?
10. What changes did Dentsu make after the incident?
11. What are companies and the Japanese government doing to reduce the number of working hours?
12. What are the two main reasons why Japanese people work so hard?
13. What's happening to Japan's demographics?
14. What are the two ways in which Japan can compensate for the labour shortage?
15. What's the percentage of foreign workers in Japan?
16. What industries do robots work in?

### **Over to you**

1. Did you find any of the facts presented in the video surprising?
2. How does the Japanese work ethic compare to the work ethic in your country?
3. Is it ok for companies to make their employees work overtime in exchange for money or extra days off?
4. Are you often asked to do overtime? What happens if you refuse?
5. Is working for the same company your entire life seen as a merit in your country?



# Three Wise Kangaroos

6. In Japan, the success of a company as a whole is more important than that of any single individual. What's the corporate culture in your country?
7. Are you expected to socialise with your colleagues and bosses after work? Do you enjoy these work outings?
8. What do you think about the Japanese government's ideas to encourage people to work less? Can you think of any better solutions?
9. Do you think a migrant workforce or automation is a better solution to the problem of lack of workers? What industries do robots work in in your country?
10. Is technology the key to a better work-life balance?