



Three Wise Kangaroos

Video – answer key

1. What do nearly a quarter of Japanese companies do?

They have their employees work over 80 hours overtime per month. These hours are often unpaid.

2. What is the salaryman?

The salaryman is defined by his loyalty to his company and expected to work in the same company his whole career, as well as participate in after-work activities.

3. How much time off are Japanese workers entitled to? How much of their holiday entitlement do they use?

On average they use up only 10 out of the 20 days they are entitled to.

4. What did the reporter notice walking around Tokyo at 3 a.m.?

There were lots of business people around.

5. In Japan, the success of a company as a whole is more important than that of any single individual.

6. What do 63% of Japanese people feel guilty about?

Taking paid leave

7. How do the long working hours affect productivity?

Japan has the lowest productivity amongst the G7 nations.

8. What is karoshi?

It means death by overwork, usually caused by a heart attack, a stroke or suicide. Hundreds of cases are reported annually.

9. What's Dentsu?

A company whose employee jumped from her office in 2015. The cause was said to have been depression caused by overwork. The woman was reportedly forced to work over 100 hours of overtime a month.

10. What changes did Dentsu make after the incident?

The lights at the office now go off at 10 pm in an effort to force the employees to leave.

11. What are companies and the Japanese government doing to reduce the number of working hours?

The government has made it mandatory to take at least five vacation days a year. A rest period is now required between the end of one working day and the start of another. In 2016 'Mountain Day' was started bringing Japan's number of public holidays to 16. In 2017 the government launched an initiative called 'Premium Fridays' encouraging companies to let their employees leave work at 3pm on the last Friday of the month.

12. What are the two main reasons why Japanese people work so hard?

Japan's culture emphasizes the group over the individual so no one wants to be the first one to leave the office. The second reason is that Japan's economy is in danger and Japanese people need to put in the hours in order to maintain its massive size.

13. What's happening to Japan's demographics?

The population is ageing fast and its birth rate is in decline. The population is projected to shrink by a third in the next 50 years.

14. What are the two ways in which Japan can compensate for the labour shortage?

Immigrants and robots.

15. What's the percentage of foreign workers in Japan?

1.6%

16. What industries do robots work in?

Hospitality, manufacturing, farming.