



Trust is the biggest strength

In this issue of Mimitaro, we visited Mirai Corporation, a construction company and spoke with representative Mr. Singh Bhupendra Man (Moriyama city).



It has been 17 years since I came to Japan from Nepal as an exchange student. I visited the Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima on vacation and was fascinated by the power of Japan to revitalize from such a devastating situation and decided to study in this country. After studying Japanese for one year in a Japanese school in Osaka, I wanted to study the superior architecture of Japan and decided to major in architecture at university. Classes in the department of architecture were tough and I struggled the first two years not only because of the language, but because I could not draft and write kanji properly. I also had a busy life as a student carrying part-time jobs at a yakiniku restaurant and a hotel, but was surrounded by compassionate people of Osaka and made many friends. After graduation, I was employed at a major architectural company and was assigned to the design and construction management division in Shiga. After working 12 years, I started my own company in Moriyama and built my office next to my home last year. Natural disasters seldom occur in Shiga, where its geography allows for a comfortable lifestyle. My wife teaches English to neighbours and my kids attend the local school. I was initially anxious after becoming independent, but am now keeping busy with customers gradually increasing from word of mouth.

My company accepts a wide range of jobs from small plumbing jobs to home and storefront design, construction and renovations. In order for a foreigner to work in Japan, it is inevitable for them to understand the Japanese language and culture, but I think it is most important to be able to act on Japanese common sense and manners. In my case, I was surrounded by only Japanese people upon arrival so I do not have any discomfort towards Japanese culture nor do I have the sense of being in a foreign country. In terms of business affairs, I must be careful and comply to Japanese standards or I will not be able to maintain a good relationship with my customers. Other than

customer service, I also work in collaboration with construction workers in various fields so my mindset must be the same as other Japanese workers or the task will not proceed smoothly. Likewise, other workers do not see myself as being foreign. Additionally, when supervising a wide range of duties, I must have the knowledge and specialization in order to give detailed instructions to other workers on the site. In that respect, working for a company allowed me to gain various experiences that have become useful.

In reality, construction work involves strenuous labor and dirty work on site. I imagined myself wearing a suit designing architecture when I graduated from the faculty of architecture, so at times, I questioned myself why I put myself in such an environment. That is when my wife asked, "What is the reason you worked so hard in university?", which gave me encouragement to rebuild my feelings. Speaking from past experiences, if you put effort in trying to make your job work better, I think there is some kind of joy afterwards. I am sure everyone has their own goals. The path to every goal is different, where some goals may not be accomplished. Even in such circumstances, we must take steps to proceed our current path and open the road to move forward. The basis for that is education so I hope for students, especially in their youth, to value their learning opportunities to open the way for the future, and for exchange students to acquire the knowledge and experience that is only possible in Japan and not lose their vision from working several part-time jobs. Meanwhile, I am currently studying for a qualification towards being a first-class architect.

I have come thus far after arriving from Nepal because I was blessed with relationships with people. This bond with "people" is my valuable treasure. At work, small projects from customers often lead to bigger ones, and responding to the trust they have in me is what provides me strength. Trust is not easy to build and can fall apart in an instant. I would like to continue to do my best to fully meet each and every trust I receive.

How to visit hospitals in Japan



○ Bring your insurance card with you

A *hokensho* is an insurance card to be presented when visiting a hospital. It is issued by a company or municipal office. When you present your insurance card at a hospital in Japan, you can be treated at 30% of the total medical expense determined by national standards. However, if you forget your card, you will not only have to pay the whole medical expense, but may also have to pay higher fees as hospitals are free to determine the medical cost and do not have to conform to national standards. Make sure to have your insurance card with you on outings. It may be a good idea for you to make your My-number card as it will be used as your insurance card in the future.

○ There are treatments when your insurance card cannot be used

Your insurance card can be used at most hospitals and compounding pharmacies in Japan. However, there are treatments where your card cannot be used. In addition to folk medicine which does not fall under national standards, insurance cards cannot be used for cosmetic surgery, teeth alignment and those treatments considered non-essential in our everyday lives. Vaccinations, medical examinations, and services for termination of pregnancy are also excluded. In the case of accidents during or to/from work, company employees will be covered by *rodo hoken* (labor insurance) separate from health insurance. Please contact your company as your insurance card cannot be used for such cases.

【Save money by visiting the hospital wisely】

It is reassuring to have a hospital that provides medical care when you suddenly get sick on holidays or at night. However, there may be surcharges resulting in higher medical bills depending on the visit.

◇ Additional fees will apply when you visit outside service hours

When you receive medical treatment outside service hours (evenings, early mornings, weekends (Sundays/holidays), midnights), you will have to pay additional fees apart from regular fees. This also applies when having medication compounded at pharmacies. Please check service hours before visiting the medical institution.

◇ A special fee is required when you visit a major hospital without prior notice

A special fee of over 5,000 yen is required when you drop into a major hospital without a reference letter. Consult your local primary doctor first, and if necessary, ask for a reference letter to be treated at a major hospital.

◇ Medical expenses will rise by visiting multiple hospitals

Have you ever changed hospitals because “symptoms don’t improve” or because the “hospital is too far”? Every time you visit a new hospital, *shoshinryo* (initial visit fee) will be charged. In addition, examinations and medication may duplicate resulting in higher medical expenses. Decide on your primary care doctor to receive medical treatment at the same hospital.

Spring is in the air to refresh your mind and body!

The second spring has arrived since the novel coronavirus was first confirmed in Japan. Let's enjoy the spring season by wearing masks, frequent hand-washing and disinfecting, and maintaining social distance to prevent spreading the virus to others and keeping it away from ourselves.



★ *Decorate the dining table through home gardening*

Golden week is a time when temperatures rise, making us feel for a good stretch. Plants and vegetables take in the sunshine and grow as well. Home gardening allows for us to nurture our own plants, enjoy harvesting them for fresh vegetables to be aligned on our dining table. How about using your balcony, yard, or rental farm for spring veggie gardening?



Rental farms are managed and operated by various organizations. Availability for facilities and services such as parking, equipment rental, and washrooms vary on the farm and organization. Please contact the agricultural department in your city hall or JA (Japan Agricultural Cooperatives) for inquiries.

★ *Discover attractions in Shiga by bike!*

Shiga is a region abundant in history and nature. There are many half day and full day cycling courses to tour areas you do not usually drop by. How about making new discoveries in Shiga by bike?



There are rental shops throughout the prefecture if you do not own a bicycle, where some shops offer rentals for free.

Bike rentals in Shiga →



Cycling courses →



★ *Take a tour of the castles in Shiga!*

Approximately 1300 castles were built during the middle and modern ages (1184-1867) in Shiga prefecture. "Those who conquer Omi (Shiga region) will conquer the world" is a famous quote as military commanders fought for control over the region during the Sengoku period of civil war. How about visiting the castles and castle ruins in Shiga?

The national treasure of Hikone castle, Azuchi castle built by Nobunaga Oda, and Hachiman castle built by Hidetsugu Toyotomi are famous tourist attractions.



Tour of castles and castle ruins in Shiga →



(Hachiman castle ruins • Hachiman-bori canal → Azuchi castle ruins → Nobunaga-no-yakata → Azuchi castle archaeological museum → Hikone castle → Sawayama castle ruins → Nagahama castle historical museum → Odani castle ruins)

Mimitaro Information

Recommended locations in spring!

◆ Biwako Terrace

Ride the cable car to an elevation of 1100m for a great panoramic view of Biwako, landscapes of Kyoto and Osaka, and the mountain ranges along the Sea of Japan atop the Terrace.

Address: Kido 1547-1, Otsu
TEL 077-592-1155



◆ La Collina Omihachiman

Japanese and western delicacies are sold in the main "grass-roof" shop, *kusayane*, located in a nature-rich field, also home to other specialty shops, restaurants, and cafes. Freshly made Baumkuchen is a must have!

Address: Kitanosho-cho 615-1, Omihachiman
TEL 0748-33-6666



◆ Shiga Agricultural Park Blume-no-oka

The 4 gardens are filled with seasonal flowers. The tulip garden can be enjoyed from the beginning to end of April!

Address: Nishioji 843 Hino-cho, Gamo
TEL 0748-52-2611



◆ Consultation for HIV/AIDS

There is a telephone consultation service when you are feeling concerned or want more information about AIDS or HIV.

Consultation regarding AIDS can be done at each of the public health centers in Shiga, or you may speak with a counselor over the telephone.

◇ HIV Telephone Consultation

TEL 077-524-0051

Every Mondays • Wednesdays 9am~12pm

◇ Testing for AIDS

- Testing for AIDS are accepted at each public health center. Test results are provided the same day. (Confirmatory test results will be given on a later date)
- Testing is free • anonymous
- Please consult a public health center to make a reservation for testing.



Mimitaro News

◆ Applications for prefectural housing

Applications for prefectural housing are accepted periodically 4 times per year, however, applications are also accepted irregularly for certain housing units. (conditions apply)



[INQ] Shiga-kenei Jyutaku Kanri Center
TEL 077-510-1500
TEL 077-510-1501 (Portuguese)

◆ Holidays in 2021 will be shifted!

Please note that holidays this year will be shifted.

Umi-no-hi Mon, July 19 → Thurs, July 22

Sports-no-hi Mon, October 11 → Fri, July 23

Yama-no-hi Wed, August 11 → Sun, August 8*

*Mon, Aug 9 is a substitute holiday

◆ Those having difficulty paying taxes

If you are having difficulty paying national tax, local tax or insurance due to the effects of the coronavirus, please consult each organization in charge regarding deferment or reduction systems.

♡ COVID-19 vaccinations

Vaccinations for COVID-19 are based on priority free of charge. Please wait for notification from your municipal office.

Notice from SIA

~Scholarship Notice~

Orizuru-kai is providing orphaned children of traffic accident victims with funds such as scholarships, school entry fee benefits, and school assistance grants (until high school graduation).

[INQ] Orizuru-kai Kyomachi 4-1-1, Otsu
Within Shiga Prefecture Road Maintenance Division
(Doro Hozen-ka) TEL 077-528-3682

Shiga Foreign Residents Information Center

(within Shiga Intercultural Association for
Globalization)

Please contact us for any concerns or questions.

Support is available in multiple languages.

Free legal consultations also available.

TEL: 077-523-5646 Fax: 077-510-0601

E-mail: mimitaro@s-i-a.or.jp

Next issue of Mimitaro scheduled in July