

Firms starting to see value in hiring grads who have studied overseas

With many Japanese companies taking advantage of the strong yen to globalize their business, some job-placement agencies are launching new services to meet the demand for global-minded personnel.

Pasona Group Inc. this month began a service to introduce recent Japanese graduates who have studied in the U.S. to domestic firms, Pasona public relations officer Aiko Umehara said Thursday.

Because fewer Japanese are studying abroad, companies see bilingual students with experience living overseas as a valuable commodity, even if they're just launching their careers.

"We have had recruitment services for people in midcareer, but the demand for new graduates is also becoming a trend," Umehara said.

According to statistics from the education ministry, the number of Japanese studying abroad peaked at nearly 83,000 in 2004. Since then the number has been falling, reaching 60,000 in 2009.

Pasona believes the demand for those who studied overseas will remain strong.

"Language skills may be polished even in Japan, but the experience of having lived in a different culture is precious for companies seeking to hire," Umehara said.

Pasona has already been contacted by approximately 30 clients and is planning to hook up 500 new graduates with their first jobs in Japan within the next three years.

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