

Japanese company that will quit your job for you sees rush of clients to start 2020

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Photo: PAKUTASO

Every year, Japan takes a much needed break for a couple days around New Year's. Most offices shut down for at least the first three days of January, and many are closed for even longer, giving employees roughly a week off. For some people, that gives them the time they need to recharge before hopping right back into their jobs with renewed energy. For others, though, those few days away from work help make it crystal clear that they don't want to go back at all, which is where Yasusaburo Takehara comes in.

Takehara is a lawyer with Osaka-based law firm Vogel, and his specialty is a

service called *taishoku daiko*, which means “job-quitting proxy.” Basically, if you want to quit your job, Takehara and his staff will handle the resignation for you, letting your boss know that you won’t be back.

With most Japanese workers going back to the office on Jan 6 this year, Takehara says that he was inundated with requests from clients to deliver their notices of resignation to their bosses at either 8 or 9 a.m. on Monday morning, at the very moment their companies began work in the new year. As a matter of fact, he had so many requests to do so that he had to add on extra temporary staff in order to fill all of the similarly timed requests.

Vogel charges 30,000 yen for the service, but it’s about more than giving weak-backboned salarymen a way to quit their jobs without having to talk to a scary boss. Yes, being able to sever ties with a harassing workplace superior without a final blast of verbal fury or high-pressure speech about how they should remain with the company is a plus, but Takehara’s job-quitting proxy provides practical, financial benefits as well.

In addition to tendering your resignation, Takehara and his staff will also handle the meetings and discussions related to any as-yet unpaid salary or overtime fees, and also see to it that you receive any legally mandated severance pay, three streams of income that not all employers are cooperative in letting flow to an individual who’s planning to leave the company. Your job-quitting proxy will also act as your agent in making sure you are allowed to use, or otherwise compensated for, any vacation time you’ve accrued but not used, and also negotiate for favorable terms as far as when/how you’ll need to vacate any company-supplied or subsidized housing, a perk that’s not uncommon in corporate Japan.

While many of Takehara’s clients are white-collar workers, recently he’s also been receiving requests from politician’s aids, entertainment media professionals, hostesses and erotic masseuses, civil servants, and members of the Japan Self-Defense Forces. Some of these professions are especially in need of legal advice and representation, as Takehara says hostesses

having to fight to receive their full final paycheck is a common problem, and SDF members' employment is governed by a separate code of law than civilian positions. But regardless of what sort of industry you want out of, Takehara's team is standing by, and promises on Vogel's website that they can tell your boss he's seen the last of you in as little as three hours after you make your request.

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