

# Survey finds only 6% of Japanese workers motivated; 7th lowest in the world

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A lot has been said about the quality of service in Japan, from companies' polite and helpful staff to their remorse over even the slightest misstep...so I'm not going to bother saying any of it again.

You see, beneath all this is a troubling development in the spirit and mentality of the workforce in Japan. It's a problem that has recently been brought to light by the Japan Business Federation in which the average worker in Japan simply isn't engaged in their work.

Fittingly, the Japan Business Federation couldn't be bothered to conduct a survey themselves, so instead they referred to a 2017 Gallup poll which measured work engagement in 139 countries. The motivation of company employees were rated as "engaged," "not engaged," and "actively disengaged."

The USA and Canada came out on top with about 29 percent of workers "engaged" in their jobs. That might not sound like a lot, but it's over twice the global average of 13 percent. Japan, meanwhile, is roughly half of the average with only six percent claiming to be engaged.

On the other hand, a whopping 71 percent are said to be "not engaged" and a further 23 percent "actively disengaged." In terms of engagement, Japan was ranked 132nd, ahead of only Iraq (6%), Tunisia (5%), Israel (5%), Azerbaijan (5%), Hong Kong (4%), Croatia (3%), and Syria (0%).

So, what does this mean? The Japan Business Federation cited the Pareto principle which states that 80 percent of effects come from 20 percent of

causes. Applying that to these results, a country should hope to have about 20 percent of its workforce "engaged" in order to get a realistically optimal output.

In this way, countries like the U.S. could be seen as over-performing, whereas Japan is woefully shorthanded. Conversely, Japan's "actively disengaged" population fits the Pareto principle better, making it a driving force of inefficiency across the country.

All that explaining was way more work than I was planning to do today, so let's hear what some random people in Japan have to say about it all.

"Most people just work to avoid starving, so they'll do just enough not to get fired."

"If companies would offer stability and the ability to retire, it would be very different."

"It's stupid. Even if you work hard and raise your salary, you'll just get laid off when you're too old to get another meaningful job."

"If I don't work, I don't eat..."

"Being motivated isn't all that great. I think some people are too motivated and dangerous."

"The companies just keep stockpiling the money without increasing wages."

"It goes beyond work, people aren't even motivated enough to start a family any more. It's too expensive."

This demotivational trend certainly isn't surprising anyone here. The cracks have been showing for a while now, from cops leaving their guns lying around in record numbers to convenience store franchisees rebelling

against corporate owners for not sharing enough in profits.

*Sources: Asagei Biz, Gallup, Hachima Kiko*

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