

# CAREERHELPLINE

Email: [helpline@media.com.hk](mailto:helpline@media.com.hk)

**The Career Helpline Section aims to solve any problem about your career. Simply ask your question by emailing to [helpline@media.com.hk](mailto:helpline@media.com.hk), and we'll find an expert to provide the answer for you.**

## Japanese Speaking Ranks High

**Q** Hi, I'm an assistant PR manager in an agency in Hong Kong. I'd like to see if I can find a related full/part-time job in Tokyo as I've planned to further my Japanese studies there for about two years. What should I do to make sure I can get a job in Tokyo? Do I have a good chance? Is it very competitive for a PR related job in Japan? Should I approach any recruitment agency there? I would really appreciate your prompt reply. Thanks very much.

**A** Tyron Giuliani, Partner, Optia Partners K.K. (Japan) suggested, "To gain any specialist role in Japan, having native or near native level of Japanese is really becoming a must. "In the case of PR, unless you can develop copy and press releases in Japanese, you will find it a very tough proposition to have a PR Agency hire you. PR Firms in Japan are also relatively small and they need to be able to utilize all staff for multiple roles. Roles within a firm are highly sort after, so to compete with limited Japanese puts you behind from the start. "However, coming here to study Japanese is a great start. With commitment, time and desire you may develop near native Japanese - this will be vital for success. "As for gaining a role in a PR firm you may in fact select to contact a PR Firm directly. Luckily MEDIA's PR Directory lists all the PR firms here in Tokyo! I wish you every success in your future career in Japan."



## Gaining Market Experience in Japan is Crucial

**Q** I'm an associate account director in an advertising agency in India. My husband is presently working in Tokyo and I want to find a job in Tokyo as well. But I don't speak Japanese and I have no idea how to get a related job there. What criteria do most of the agencies there set for a foreign candidate for an account servicing job? Is Japanese speaking a crucial advantage to be considered? Really appreciate your help.

**A** Midori Watanabe, Consultant, Hudson Global Resources (Japan) replied, "Frankly speaking, finding a job in Japan without any prior experience in Japan or language skills is quite difficult. Although the market



is picking up, still a lot of companies find it difficult to hire non-Japanese candidates due to the tight economy as well as their clients' request. "One suggestion I would make is to go through your own network. If the agency you are

working for has an office in Tokyo, ask for an internal transfer. If not, trying for companies in the same group might be also helpful. Also to maximize your chance of getting a job, I would suggest you consider widening your target group to include re-

lated companies like brand consulting and research firms. Once you get market experience, there is a possibility to go back to advertising industry again. I wish you good luck."

(Next issue: India)



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