

About Myself

~The Road to Open Employment and My Daily Life~

Akira Teramachi, Saitama-city, Japan

Self Introduction

My name is Akira Teramachi, 25 years old.

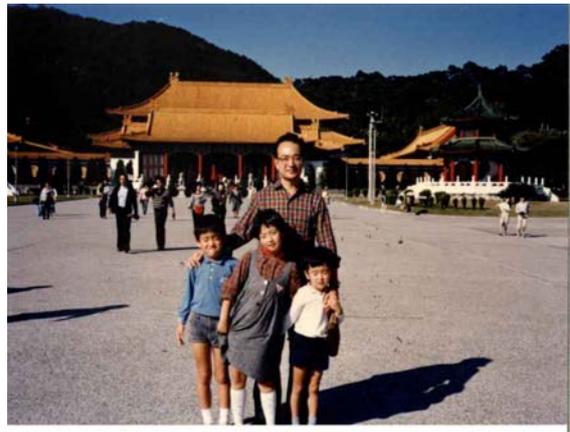
I was born in 1982, in Urawa-city, Saitama prefecture. Urawa-city is in the north of Tokyo, and it takes 40 minutes from Tokyo station by train.

My family members are five; father, mother, older sister, older brother and myself. Since my brother has moved out when he started working, four of us live together now.

When I was four years old, my father was transferred to the Taiwan branch and my family lived in Taiwan for 3 years from 1986 to 1989. We lived in an apartment in Tonhonchie, Daian-ward, Taipei-city. I remember Ms. Aren who was a housemaid of us and Ms. Yo who I chatted with.



The view from the apartment



(Left) my brother, sister, father and I



(Left) I, father, mother, Ms.Yo, and sister.

When we met again in 1999.

About School Years

After finishing my father's transfer, we came back to the town where I was born.

Although I entered the local elementary school and junior high school, I could not adjust to them and went to a free school nearby.

When I graduated from junior high school, the free school started correspondence high school

named “Saiseigakusha”, so I entered. I was the first student there and there were only three students including me.

In that school, the first theme was to play. And we learned about living skills through cooking lunch and camping. Also, I learned to express by using full of my body through Japanese class in which we mainly read aloud, and playing drama.

I also had training in making cookies at Palette Confectionery, a sheltered workshop in Ebisu, Tokyo, for two weeks as vocational training.

It takes 90 minutes to commute to Palette by train and it is so hard during the rush hour. And there are many train lines in Tokyo so it will be a trouble if you do not check which line to take beforehand.

Although I had a cold in the middle of the training, it was a good opportunity to learn how to make cookies and take trains.

After graduating from Saiseigakushya, I continued to go there for two more years, so I was there for five years in total.

I had many difficulties there because there were many different people and different matters, but I had many experiences with the support of a lot of people.

The living skills I learned there, such as how to cook and how to clean up, have been very helpful for my life.

Vocational Training

In the fifth year at Saiseigakusya, I started finding a job.

It was very difficult so the mothers of the students talked over and found a vocational training center for us.

It was the National Rehabilitation Center for Persons with Disabilities in Tokorozawa-city in Saitama.

I had to take many examinations such as paper test, interview and aptitude test, but I managed to pass them and started going there from April for one year.

I received 100,000 yen per month as a living expense while taking the training there and I saved it carefully.

It took me about two hours from home to the center by train, so I left home around 6 o'clock every morning. The train commuting experience that I had when I took training at Palette was helpful.

There were three courses of vocational training in the center. They were operation, desk work and care service for the aged, and I chose the care service for the aged because my parents told me that I was suited for it and there was also increasing demand for the care workers and I could take a license through the training.

During the care training, I learned how to make the bed, support bathing, use the wheelchair and help them eat.

After finishing the care training, I got the 3rd grade qualification of helper.

Though the training in the center was very hard, trainers were very nice to me and I could also get best friends here.

Job Hunting

Although April was the month to start working, I started looking for a job in October.

Information of job offerings is provided by the public employment office in each area. Consulting with the staff in the center, I wrote resume and applied for some of them.

But it was not successful because of the lack of job vacancies in care service at that time. So I

decided to look for a clerical job and started the training from November. The contents of the training were how to circulate checks and enter data into computer.

At the end of November, I applied for clerical work and sent many resumes through the public employment office again, but it did not work out because of the lack of offerings again.

Then again, I consulted with the center and decided to apply for operation works which was easier to get, and started the training for it.

In the training for the operation work, I learned things I have to be careful when I work at a warehouse such as how to carry, treat and check things.

Thus, I had to take other training again and again, and it made it more difficult to find a job as job offerings decreased as time went by.

At the end of February, I finally got a job at a company named DOIT as an operation worker.

Official employment month was April but there was a trial period for a month in March and I could finally get employed in April, 2005.

About DOIT

The name of the company is DOIT.

It sells woods, tools, hardware, paint, gardening tools, pet and car accessories, and the number of goods in each store is about 40000 to 50000 kinds.

The headquarters is located in Saitama-city, and there are 25 stores in Saitama, Tokyo and Kanagawa prefectures.





My Work

I am working at Higashiomiya branch which is about 40 minutes away from my house by train.

My tasks are:

- 1) To display the goods after taking them out of the storage behind of the store before opening the store every morning. (I am in charge of woods.)
- 2) To restock the goods.
- 3) To answer the questions politely when asked by customers

As the store opens at nine o'clock in the morning, my work starts at seven every morning.

To not to be late, I leave my house at 6:15 every morning and it is hard especially in winter as it is still dark and cold.

Including the lunch break for one hour, my working hour is nine hours so I finish the work at four. I get home shortly after five, and go to bed around ten every night to prepare for the next morning.

The store is open 365 days but employees take turn and have 2 days off in a week.

My job contract is reviewed every six months.

My salary is paid by hour and it is 820 yen. Taking off the social insurance and tax, my monthly salary is about 120,000 yen

The skills I have learned at the center, such as how to serve for the customers and carry heavy baggage, have been helpful to my work. Also, how to use computer has also been helpful to making price tags.

But there are so many goods and I sometimes have difficulties in answering to the customers when they ask me the location of certain goods or for some explanation of the goods. In that case, I reply them in a polite manner with saying that I will introduce the person in charge. But some customers with short temper get angry and say, "Why don't you know such a thing?"

What I like about my work is that I can meet different customers and colleagues there. And I also feel happy when I can serve for the customers well and they look happy.

I will learn more about my work and make efforts to be able to please customers.



About My Hobby, Leisure Activities and Friends

Now, my favorite leisure activity is to go to the movies with my two best friends from the center. The latest movies which I saw are “Harry Potter Final” and “Xīyóu Jì (Adventure of a monkey with a monk)” starred by Shingo Katori. We discuss and decide which theater to go and reserve the tickets.

After the movie, we go for Karaoke and sing our favorites songs.

I also enjoy watching historical TV dramas such as “Shinsen-gumi” and “Furin Kazan.” It is more exciting to know the details after watching the drama.

In The Future

I like my current job because I can meet many different people and study a lot of things. It is quite tough as I have to wake up early in the morning and the store is open 365 days, but I would like to continue.

And also, I would like to join other people and groups, and try various things actively.

Thank you.