

INTERVIEW SERIES WITH ALUMNI OF 'LOOK EAST POLICY'

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Tell us about your study in Japan

I went to Japan from 2004 to 2009 and I studied in Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology in Organic and Polymer Materials Chemistry, at the Faculty of Engineering. After I finished my degree, I went back to Malaysia. I started my first job at Penfibre Sdn. Berhad, one of the subsidiary companies of Toray in Penang. I worked for about a year as Production Technical Engineer before I moved to Selangor following my husband. In KL back then, there were many shared services center starting up and looking for Japanese speakers. Hence, I managed to jump from engineering field to finance when I accepted a job as Associate Finance Executive at DHL Asia Pacific Shared Services Sdn Bhd for their Japan Finance migration project. Under this project, I went back to Japan for almost a month to study the processes and tasks for knowledge transfer back to Malaysia. I worked in DHL for two years before I continued my Master's in UiTM Shah Alam in Chemical Engineering.

While pursuing my Master's, I had an opportunity to join the HR Center of Excellence Team in Amway Business Services Asia Pacific Sdn Bhd, to support Japanese employees. After 5 years of working in this company, at the end of 2018, I started to operate a petrol station in Seri Iskandar, Perak, nearby Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS. Currently I have about 15 staffs working at the station and I am looking forward to further my studies in management at Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS.

What surprised you in Japan

The struggle was to catch up in class. When I enrolled in this course I was the only Malaysian student ever, so I needed to work with, get in touch with many Japanese people and make friends with Japanese colleagues. At the very beginning I don't understand much of what I learned in the class and I had to get the notes from my colleagues. You have to work super hard at the very beginning to get yourself comfortable.

Look East Policy & you

In the past, Malaysia has been sending students to western countries (i.e UK, United States) but when started to look East, we created a lot more chances to build bridges between the countries in terms of economy, tourism and many more. I do believe there is a difference between students graduated from western and eastern countries. However, isn't that good as we need the mixture of talents in order to build our nation together.

Your favourite:

Person

Matsushima Nanako

She is talented, flawless and evergreen

Place

Tokyo, Hokkaido

Tokyo is where all the exciting things happen and Hokkaido is where you get to rest surrounded by beautiful nature. Love to be in Hokkaido in any season.

Food

Okonomiyaki, Sushi, Soba

Custom

When I went to Japan in 2004, what I liked the most was the cleanliness and the punctuality of the train system. With public transport you can take the train and bus and go anywhere in Japan easily, even though you don't have a car or driving license. Japan has a very good and convenient transport system that helps me a lot when I travel in Japan. Furthermore, they have so many promotions for local travel.

Future Malaysia & Japan

It is great when we are no longer required to apply for a visa to go to Japan. There are many Japanese staying in our country, it would be exciting if we can get together especially for ex-students to communicate with them in Japanese. This also helps us to practice our Japanese language and chances for them to learn about Malaysians. Since there are a few Japanese factories in Perak, I believe there are some Japanese residing here.

When I was in Japan, it was very hard to find Halal Japanese food. But nowadays, you can find many Halal Japanese food available everywhere around Tokyo. I am hoping to see more Halal Authentic Japanese food in Malaysia, run by Japanese people in Malaysia.

Additional

I wish to get connected with Japanese who stay in Malaysia because I really want to learn how to make sushi and other Japanese food from them especially from Japanese housewives here because I want to know their secrets to make authentic Japanese food. If there is a community here, we can get together with their families and learn about each other cultures.



Otaru, Hokkaido



Osaka Castle



Graduation Day