

Japanese Support System for Competitive Employment of Persons with Disabilities

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The purpose of this paper is to investigate and discuss the reality, issues and future directions of employment support for persons with disabilities which employers receive from external specialized agencies for their employment of disabilities. First, this paper outlines, from the viewpoint of employers, employment-related issues of persons with disabilities, based on interview surveys and large research studies. Then it reviews businesses' in-house problem-solving efforts and refers to employment support services provided by external agencies. While companies are trying to achieve the quota stipulated in the Employment Quota System, there still remain a number of challenges. In the future, coupled with the implementation of the Employment Quota System, more companies are expected to actively make use of employment support services, and this will lead to the increasing employment of persons with disabilities.

I. Corporate Needs for Employment Support

This paper, first, identifies issues concerning corporate employment of persons with disabilities and verifies what kind of employment support companies need, based on findings from interviews and mail surveys.

1. Comments of Employers

The following is a quick list focusing on four topic commonly talked about during interview surveys with those in charge of human resources at 11 companies listed in major stock exchanges in Japan, which were conducted in November, 2009 by National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation.^{1,2} Companies surveyed were businesses in major industry sectors such as the automobile sector, the electronics sector and the elderly care sector that currently underpin the Japanese economy and employment, including a semiconductor-manufacturing equipment maker, an automotive parts supplier, an auto equipment distributor, a precious metal manufacturing, wholesale and retail business, a women's shoes planning and consignment sale business, a baby supply planning and retail business, a medical supplier, a foods supermarket, a staff agency and outplacement service business, an elderly care service business and an IT-related service business.

¹ A research institute in charge of vocational rehabilitation established by the national government, responsible for training programs for professional supporters, advices to bodies concerning vocational rehabilitation, and recommendations on the national government's policies to promote employment of persons with disabilities.

² Unfinished manuscript (to be published in 2010).

Comments of Those in Charge of Human Resources in Listed Companies Concerning the Employment of Persons with Disabilities and the Employment Quota System

(1) Gaps between the ideal model of job seekers and the reality of job seekers

When we look for job seekers with disabilities, it is rare that persons with disabilities that we have envisioned apply for positions at our company. We would like to employ motivated job seekers with slight disabilities who will serve to achieve our target Actual Employment Rate.³

Those considered to contribute to the achievement of an employer's legal employment quota of disabled workers are persons with disabilities who possess statutory Identification Booklets for Persons with Disabilities.⁴

Persons with slight disabilities include those with loss of part of a finger capable of working on a light duty, persons with lower limb disability capable of going up and down stairs with the aid of canes, persons with heart disease capable of going to work everyday, and hearing-impaired people capable of smoothly making speech-based communication with their superiors, colleagues, clients and customers. In B to B (Business to Business) sectors, of particular importance is the communication skill to be able to bring out the need of clients. Many of job applicants with disabilities that "Hello Work"⁵ (Public Employment Security Offices) have recommended are the severely disabled.

Sufficiently motivated job seekers with disabilities are those willing to contribute to the increase in profit and to make concrete suggestions concerning market strategies, who are able to adapt to human resource development programs and socialize well with their coworkers, without feeling self-conscious with disabilities.

(2) How those in and out of companies concerning the employment of disabled persons consider the reality of employment of disabled persons

We can understand the importance of normalization of disabled people through employing persons with disabilities. Yet some of those in and out of our company are not willing to understand the importance, including, the top management, superiors and coworkers of workers with disabilities, corporate shareholders such as main financing banks and individual shareholders, customers (both corporate and individual

³ The percentage of the number of persons with disabilities actually employed by the company among the total number of employees in the company.

⁴ Identification of a person with disability is, in principle, carried out based on the possession of the Identification Booklet for Persons with Disabilities. The Booklets are smaller than passport in design, vary according to physical, intellectual, or psychiatric disability, and that vary according to local governments which issued the booklets.

⁵ Outpost agency of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare in charge of reception desk services concerning employment insurance and job placement services, and 589 offices of Hello Work were installed around the country as of 2009.

customers), and owners of buildings in which we have our offices.

Those in sections where persons with disabilities are assigned say “I don’t know how to communicate with them as our co-workers,” “He/she does not work as a full-fledged worker, and I am afraid that it will affect the job performance of our section,” “He/she cannot adapt to human resource development programs designed for new university graduates and strays from the programs,”⁶ “Because of him/her, it takes longer time for business meetings and for giving job instructions.”

While relevant government agencies require us to achieve the target Actual Employment Rate with their focus on the target value, our staff in charge of personnel affairs have to work out concrete measures to employ persons with disabilities. These staff are sometime caught between government agencies requiring the achievement of the target and their top management.

(3) Human resource development for persons with disabilities

I do not think that we can develop him/her as an employee in our company. I don’t know how to teach him/her methods of work.

I think that it will be no use applying our human resource development programs to persons with disabilities. Now that every job duty increasingly takes much knowledge and persons in charge have to learn a lot about their job duties. As a company, we would like to train and develop wage-earning human resources in a long term. It will be too late to learn that it is impossible to train and develop those with disabilities as our staff after having spent a lot of resources on their training.

(4) What kind of job duties persons with disabilities perform

Personnel affairs departments have no knowledge about the details of job duties that persons with disabilities perform at sections where they have been assigned to.⁷ When persons with disabilities are assigned to their workplaces, managers of these workplaces sometimes tell personnel affairs departments that they have no idea about what kind of job will suit those with disabilities. Staff in personnel affairs departments has no idea about this question either. In ordinary circumstance, those in personnel affairs departments need not learn the details of job duties. Before assigning persons

⁶ In Japan, students graduate from universities in March, and many leading companies conduct periodic hiring for new graduates in April every year as full-time workers. Those new graduates hired and trained as full-time workers in April include those with disabilities. According to findings from a survey on member companies conducted in 2009 by Nippon Keidanren (Japan Business Federation) with more than 1,600 member leading corporations (Response rate: 34.8%), companies where the ratio of experienced workers among the total number of persons newly employed every year is 30% or less account for 78.9% of the companies surveyed. 13.9% of the respondents answered that they never employ experienced workers. (Nippon Keidanren 2009)

⁷ In Japan, generally, when Japanese companies newly hire employees, first, those in charge of human resources hire people and then assign them to each section.

with disabilities to their workplaces, however, they have to learn such details and suggest what kind of job will suit these persons. This is burdensome for those in charge of personnel affairs.

It is difficult to appoint employees with disabilities to posts such as front line sales representative positions or retail positions where they are to directly contact our customers. In recent years, with internal demand slowing down and increasingly diversified customer and client needs (accordingly, it is increasingly difficult for us to know what they need), and in the face of faster delivery requirements (accordingly, we are required to get work accomplished in a shorter time period with a sense of urgency), even workers with no disabilities sometimes suffer from sickness after being overwhelmed by customer complaints or by too much work. I am afraid that those with disabilities are more likely to suffer from sickness under such circumstances.

While, in back-office sections such as sections in charge of logistic support for marketing or those responsible for general affairs, personnel affairs and development, the cost for human resource development is low and the pressure at workplaces is more manageable. Those at Hello Work often advise us to assign employees with disabilities to back-office sections. Companies, however, have been streamlining their operations in Japan and reducing personnel expenses incurred in connection with back-office sections, which are not directly contributing to corporate profitability, in order to relocate our production bases and marketing bases to Asian countries where their market share has been on the rise. Accordingly, in the future it will be more difficult to appoint disabled person to back-office sections.

The above can be summarized in the following.

Whether a person with disabilities will be employed or not depends on whether he or she can adapt himself/herself to circumstances in general job duties and to general human resource development. In order to achieve an employer's legal employment quota of disabled workers, each company has to employ a certain number of persons with disabilities. As a desperate measure, persons in charge of personnel affairs consider whether it is possible to appoint persons with disabilities to back-office sections such as sections in charge of logistic support for marketing or those responsible for general affairs. However, these sections now face the need to reduce personnel costs following the downsizing of corporate operations, and accordingly, some respondents suggested that such measures would have their limitations. It is too superficial to simply attribute the difficulty in employing persons with disabilities to the discrepancies between qualifications of each person with disabilities and job duties assigned to them. Threats of external and internal conditions of business, including corporate structures, human resource development systems and sectors and stakeholders surrounding companies, hinder the employment of persons with disabilities.

It is true that the number of companies surveyed (11 companies) was too small. Yet it is noteworthy to read comments, shared by persons in charge of human resources concerning

the employment of persons with disabilities, which undoubtedly reflect their common concerns about the employment quota, based on findings from interviews with a number of companies in different industry sectors, and to learn what is needed in employment support for persons with disabilities.

2. Challenges to Companies in the Employment of Persons with Disabilities

According to a nationwide survey of some 7,000 private companies with five or more employees conducted by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, as challenges and issues to be addressed in the employment of persons with disabilities, for persons with physical disabilities,⁸ 26.9% of the companies surveyed cited concerns over “whether persons in our company will understand and get to know disabilities;” for persons with intellectual disabilities, 35.8% of the surveyed, and for persons with psychiatric disabilities, 38.7%, respectively (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare 2009). These findings are consistent with the comments of the companies, as I noted at the beginning of this paper. If, from the viewpoint of the top management and those in charge of human resources, those in sections where persons with disabilities are to be assigned lack understanding of the significance of the employment of disabled persons (employment philosophy) and know-how (job accommodation techniques), persons with disabilities will still find it difficult to be employed.

According to a survey of some 5,000 private companies with 30 or more regular employees across the country conducted by National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation, 34.2% of the companies responding to the survey cited, as a reason for not recruiting or employing persons with disabilities, “lack of support systems for persons with disabilities” (National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation 2007). In addition, according to the same survey, when asked about what it takes to increase the employment of persons with disabilities in the future, 50% or more of the companies responding answered “injection of additional funds into the environmental improvement at workplaces (material and/or human support measures),” and 20% or more, “education of employees.” Then, asked whether they had made use of Grant Systems applicable to the employment of persons with disabilities during the past three years, only 14.3% of the companies responding answered that they applied “intra-firm Job Coaches” (which will be discussed later).

Players involved in the employment of persons with disabilities should recognize the

⁸ In Japanese laws regarding welfare and employment issues, “physical disabilities” is a collective term defined in terms of medical models which refers to the following five disability groups: (i) visual impairments, (ii) functional impairments in hearing or equilibrium, (iii) functional impairments in voice, speech or chewing, (iv) orthopedic impairments and (v) functional impairments of the heart, kidneys, respiratory organs, bladder, rectum or small intestine, or the disorder of immunological functions induced by human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Each of these definitions just describes the disabilities only in terms of physiology, anatomy and pathology. Accordingly, it is very difficult for companies to know what are to be addressed in the employment of persons with such disabilities. Experts were aware of this problem in the 1980s at the latest, yet, it still remains unsolved.

significance of systematically organizing human support measures in their companies for assisting persons with disabilities who require special accommodations (i.e. persons with disabilities, excluding those with only slight disabilities). Unlike physical facilities improvement including buildings and machinery, human support measures have not attracted sufficient attention. The details and the significance of physical facilities improvement, such as the installation of ramps and the adjustment of the heights of desks and tables accessible to wheelchair users, and the installation of screen readers for persons with visual impairments who use personal computers as network terminals, are easier to be intuitively understood and it is readily possible to calculate the extra cost for them. On the other hand, it requires some expert knowledge to understand the details of human support measures, such as the arrangement of interpreters for the deaf and hard of hearing who use sign languages and study meetings to learn sign languages, and special accommodations required to give instructions and communicate with persons with severe intellectual disabilities and persons with developmental disabilities at workplaces. The significance of them is more difficult to be understood, and it is harder to estimate the extra cost for them. In order to be able to succeed in human support measures carried out for the employment of persons with disabilities, there are limits to what general human resource management alone can do. If one tries to provide special accommodations for persons with disabilities in the framework of general human resource management, it will heavily strain those in charge of human resources and supervisors of those with disabilities who teach work methods to them at workplaces and therefore, the employment of disabled persons will not last long. If those in charge of human resources are concerned about such things before hiring persons with disabilities, the employment of persons with disabilities will seldom take place. Only a limited number of companies express their intention to make use of highly-professional employment support services by shouldering extra costs for the services. I cannot say that it is sufficient to assign the role of supporters for persons with disabilities to a certain number of employees. It is believed that, in preparation for personnel relocation of persons in charge, it is necessary to systematically address this issue in a company-wide manner so that employees can retain, disseminate and enhance the expertise on the employment management of persons with disabilities. It is preferable that external employment support will be of some help. In other words, the main player in the employment of persons with disabilities is companies which employ them and not external bodies. The employment support is expected to support companies that employ persons with disabilities, from the viewpoint of professional organs, by playing the role of consultants to in-company support systems which are in charge of solving individual problems.

II. Utilization of Job Coach System

In Japan, experts in various fields, including those specializing in education, welfare, labor and medical services, are involved in the employment of persons with disabilities, and they also provide employment support to companies. In this paper, I would like to present the Job Coach System as a typical example of such employment support services. Yet, only minorities of companies use employment support services. However, those companies which actually use the system have recognized the positive effects of the system. In this section, I would like to present such effects, by referring to the findings from mail surveys.

1. With Whom Companies Are Willing to Consult

In this section, I would like to present the findings from a national survey of 3,049 private companies conducted by National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation in 2007 (National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation 2008).⁹ According to the survey, 43.0% (425 companies) of the companies responding (the total of 988 companies) said that they had consulted someone or had used some sources of information concerning the employment of persons with disabilities. The largest percentage of the 425 companies cited Hello Work as sources of information, followed by Internet and other sources (Table 1). “The use of internet” here includes the use of private-sector employment agency services for persons with disabilities, and not mere information gathering.¹⁰

Among the sources listed above, Employment and Life Support Centers for Persons with Disabilities¹¹ and Local Vocational Centers for Persons with Disabilities¹² are agencies to which extra-firm job coaches (which will be discussed later) belong.

⁹ The number of companies surveyed in this study was 3,049 and the number of valid responses was 988. The companies surveyed can be grouped into three categories: a group of companies interested in employment support services, and two groups of companies having significant needs for employment support services. From the viewpoint of questionnaire items in this paper, differences between the groups do not matter. Accordingly, in this paper, they were referred to as “companies interested in employment support services or those having needs for employment support services” collectively.

¹⁰ Recruiting via the internet by major companies is now very popular for job applicants, including job seekers with disabilities, new graduates and mid-career job seekers. According to the survey above mentioned conducted by Nippon Keidanren (2009), 77.3% of the companies accepted job seekers’ applications only via the internet, and 89.0% of the companies which accepted applications via the internet said that the use of the internet worked well.

¹¹ As of April 2009, 246 Employment and Life Support Centers for Persons with Disabilities were put in place nationwide, and more will be established in the future. They are organs serving the employment of persons with disabilities, operated by private nonprofit corporations such as social welfare juridical persons.

¹² 52 Local Vocational Centers for Persons with Disabilities have been put in place nationwide. They are bodies serving the employment of persons with disabilities operated by Independent Administrative Agencies which conduct duties commissioned by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

Table 1. Comments of Those in Charge of Human Resources in the Listed Companies Surveyed Concerning the Employment of Persons with Disabilities and the Employment Quota System (M.A., n=425)

Consulting Hello Work	79.5%
Use of Internet, participation in seminars and literature searches	28.9%
Consulting other companies, affiliated companies, employer's associations, and industry associations and collecting information from them	19.3%
Consulting educational establishments, Vocational Ability Development Centers, and welfare facilities	18.1%
Consulting Prefectural Associations for Employment of Persons with Disabilities	16.2%
Consulting Employment Support Centers for Persons with Disabilities and Employment and Life Support Centers for Persons with Disabilities	16.0%
Consulting Local Vocational Centers for Persons with Disabilities	14.6%
Consulting management consultants and specialists in social insurance and collecting information from them	5.6%
Consulting municipal offices and municipal welfare offices	3.8%
Consulting other sources and collecting information from other sources	2.6%
Companies that have already consulted some sort sources and/or collected information from them	100%

2. Job Coach System

The Job Coach System is an institutional system unique to Japan which was inspired by the Job Coach model in the U.S. Supported Employment. In Japan, there exists no employment status, such as Supported Employment in the United States. In addition, in terms of the content of duties and of their positions in the employment of disabled persons, the Japanese Job Coaches are somehow different from Job Coaches in the United States, while they share some aspects common with U.S. counterparts. Japanese Job Coaches have three missions as listed below.

First, they provide employment support for companies. More precisely, they get would-be supervisors and would-be coworkers of persons with disabilities to learn how to teach work methods to them, suggest what kind of job will suit employees with disabilities, and encourage those in charge to assign persons with disabilities to such jobs.

Secondly, Japanese Job Coaches support persons with disabilities. They serve as coaches for persons with disabilities at workplaces, on behalf of their employers. In addition, Japanese Job Coaches provide essential education to persons with disabilities so that they can make professional progress, for example, by teaching them how to change buses or trains to go to work, how to deal with the situation when buses or trains get delayed, good manners at workplace, how to observe rules concerning health and safety, how to receive instructions from their superiors and how to report to their superiors, how to pass the time during rest breaks, how to deal with their coworkers, how to care for their own health at home, and how to prepare for the next business day.

Thirdly, they support families of persons with disabilities. Job Coaches ask families of disabled employees to maintain a normal and healthy daily rhythm by attaching importance to sleep and eating in preparation for performing their job duties, and also ask family members to treat with care people with disabilities so that they can take more pride in their contributions to the society. Experts specializing in employment support in Japan share a common understanding that family members of persons with disabilities are important factors supporting the employment of disabled persons.

As above listed, Japanese Job Coaches ask companies, persons with disabilities themselves and their families to change the way they think and act, so as to ease the concerns of persons with disabilities and of their employers. They also serve to allow persons with disabilities to make professional progress and contribute to their employers in spite of disabilities and aim to realize the long-term stable employment of disabled persons. In so doing, Job Coaches will squarely respond to comments of those in charge in companies, as mentioned in the list at the beginning of this paper ([1] through [4]). In other words, in order to deal with the gaps between the ideal model of job seekers with disabilities and the reality of disabled job seekers, Job Coaches will specifically demonstrate that persons with disabilities are able to perform some job duties. In order to enhance understanding among those in and out of companies, Job Coaches will explain them individually what is going on. For the purpose of human resource development for persons with disabilities, Job Coaches themselves teach persons with disabilities how to perform job duties, or they tailor and adapt training programs of each company to disabled employees, based on the understanding of characteristics of each disability, so that the employer can provide human resource development for employees with disabilities. In order to determine what kind of job duties persons with disabilities will perform, Job Coaches conduct job analysis and development, which will be discussed later in this paper. These are the roles Job Coaches have to play.

However, there exists no legal status for Job Coaches which will allow the exclusive use of the title of “Job Coach” or the monopoly of Job Coaches’ job duties. Not all of those referred to as “Job Coaches” in Japan perform the job duties above mentioned and conversely, some perform job duties very similar to those mentioned above though their job title is not “Job Coach.” Some municipalities and welfare purpose training institutions support the employment of persons with disabilities by corporations, through fostering their own Job Coaches.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare has already established the job title called “Job Coaches.” The Job Coaches can be divided into the following three categories.

The first category is Job Coach stationed in Local Vocational Centers. These Job Coaches are assigned to 52 Local Vocational Centers for Persons with Disabilities nationwide and shall undergo designated training programs.

The second category is Type 1 Job Coach. They are persons who have been appointed from among staff by directors of Employment and Life Support Centers for Persons with

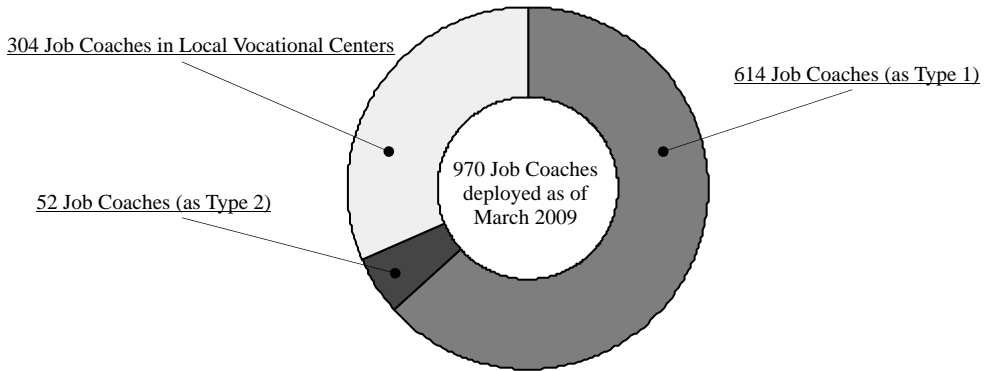


Figure 1. The Number of Job Coaches Deployed

Disabilities or of social welfare facilities mainly established by social welfare juridical persons or by nonprofit organizations. These directors have those appointed persons undergo designated training programs after having submitted applications to authorities. In order to be eligible for these programs, applying Employment and Life Support Centers or facilities have to meet the requirements in terms of experience in employment support for employers and in collaboration with Local Vocational Centers for Persons with Disabilities.

The third category is Type 2 Job Coach stationed at employing companies (intra-firm Job Coach). They are persons who have been appointed from among staff by corporate managers of companies meeting the requirements and hiring persons with disabilities. These corporate managers have those appointed persons undergo designated training programs after having submitted applications to authorities.

The number of Job Coaches has been on the rise. Figure 1 shows the number of job coaches nationwide as of March 2009. In order to be eligible for the job title of each category of Job Coaches, applicants have to have experience of having carried out employment management of persons with disabilities at companies or of having supported the job hunting of students with disabilities at educational institutions, or have to meet designated requirements, and at the same time, they have to pass through a nine-day training program including lectures, exercises and actual project working. There already exists a mechanism which can be referred as “Job Coach System,” where the three categories of Job Coaches work together where necessary, using companies, Local Vocational Centers for Persons with Disabilities and other facilities as their bases. For example, these supporters ask family members of persons with disabilities to facilitate the adaptation of specific persons with disabilities to their workplaces, organize case conferences on a given person with disabilities to support him/her in rotation, or hold study meetings in order to improve their expertise.

Personnel costs and activities expenses for Job Coach System are funded by two sources. First, funds are allocated, as activities expenses for Local Vocational Centers for

Table 2. Reasons for Not Deploying Type 2 Job Coaches (M.A., n=950)

Lack of the need to provide special accommodations to persons with disabilities they employ and their human resource management for ordinary employees being sufficiently effective for persons with disabilities	56.9%
Having heard nothing about the system	38.2%
Never recommended to use the system	16.1%
No one is eligible to be appointed as a Job Coach	13.6%
Having no disabled employee	8.7%
Not knowing where consultation services are available	4.4%
Other reasons	4.6%
Companies that have never deployed intra-firm Job Coaches	100%

Persons with Disabilities, to Job Coaches stationed in Local Vocational Centers. These financial resources are portions of employer’s contribution of the central government’s special account for Employment Insurance. On the other hand, funds allocated to Type 1 and Type 2 Job Coaches are levies collected from companies which fail to comply with the stipulated employment quota. When Type 1 and Type 2 Job Coaches have performed job duties which meet certain requirements, according to their performances, grants up to a certain maximum amount will be provided by the central government to juridical persons or companies to which these supporters belong. The grants to Type 1 and Type 2 Job Coaches are designed to enhance support services for the employment of persons with disabilities in non-governmental sectors, by partly subsidizing personnel costs and activities expenses for Type 1 and Type 2 Job Coaches.

3. Intra-Firm Job Coaches

In this section, I would like to present other findings from the above mentioned survey conducted by National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation (National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation 2008). Among the companies responding to the survey, only 0.8% answered that they had experience of having deployed Type 2 Job Coaches (intra-firm Job Coaches) and only 0.3% said that they were deploying them at the time of the survey. In addition, 25.3% of them said they had no experience of having deployed Type 2 Job Coaches, but they said they were willing to learn more about the details of the Type 2 Job Coach System. Furthermore, 56.9% of the companies having no experience of deploying Type 2 System cited, as the reason for not deploying them, “the lack of the need to provide special accommodations to persons with disabilities they employ and their human resource management for ordinary employees being sufficiently effective for persons with disabilities” (Table 2), and a slightly smaller percentage of them, 36.7%, cited “having heard nothing about the system,” while a further smaller percentage, 16.1%, cited “never recommended to

use the system.” 89.4% of the companies responding to this survey hired at least one person with physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities or psychiatric disabilities.

According to a survey of 280 member companies conducted Japan Association of Employers of Persons with Severe Disabilities,¹³ 50% of the companies responding to the survey said that they considered the deployment of Type 2 Job Coaches in their countries. Only 5.4% of the companies responding to the survey deployed Type 2 Job Coaches (Japan Association of Employers of Persons with Severe Disabilities 2007). 30% said that they had ever been supported either by Job Coaches stationed in Local Vocational Centers or by Type 2 Job Coaches, and around 80% of those having ever supported by them was those which had experience of being supported for their employees with intellectual disabilities. 60% of the companies employing only persons with intellectual disabilities cited, as the role they expected Type 2 Job Coaches to play, “facilitating the relation with employees with disabilities and other employees.”

4. Extra-Firm Job Coaches

According to the above mentioned survey conducted by National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation, asked about their awareness of Job Coaches stationed in Local Vocational Centers and of Type 1 Job Coaches, in other words, their awareness about employment support services provided by extra-firm Job Coaches, more than half (56.3%) of the companies responding said that they knew them (Table 3) (National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation 2008). At the same time, only 11.2% of the companies responding said that they had ever used the services (Table 4).

As above mentioned, this survey explored awareness and experience of companies that were interested in employment support services and of companies that really needed employment support services. Accordingly, as Table 4 shows, it is a matter of course that some of the companies surveyed said that they “like to know more about this system.”

In addition, the largest percentage, or 57.0%, of the respondents that had not deployed extra-firm Job Coaches cited “the lack of the need to provide special accommodations to persons with disabilities they employ and their human resource management for ordinary employees being sufficiently effective for persons with disabilities,” as the reason for not deploying Job Coaches (Table 5). The above tendency is also recognized in the findings from the above mentioned survey concerning intra-firm Job Coaches (Table 2).

¹³ Nationwide non-profitable body organized by business owners of small and medium-sized companies, mainly in manufacturing sectors, which hire a number of persons with severe disabilities, including persons with motor disorders affecting the whole body such as cerebral palsy, persons with severe intellectual disabilities and persons with schizophrenia, for a longer period of time. This association holds training workshops for job duty improvement, recognizes the accomplishments of companies of good standing and organizes enlightenment programs for the public.

Table 3. Companies' Awareness of Job Coaches Stationed in Local Vocational Centers and of Type 1 Job Coaches (n=976)

Having known the system	56.3%
Not having known the system	42.5%
N.A.	1.2%
Total	100%

Table 4. Companies' Experience of Having Used Job Coaches Stationed in Local Vocational Centers or Type 1 Job Coaches and Whether They Are Interested in These Supporters (n=958)

Never used the system: (a)+(b)	85.7%
Like to know more about the system (a)	19.1%
Not interested in the system (b)	66.6%
Having ever used the system: (c)+(d)–(e)	11.2%
Used the system before (c)	8.5%
Using the system at present (d)	3.3%
Used the system before and using the system at present (e)	0.6%
Subtotal: (a)+(b)+ (c)+(d)–(e)	96.9%
No response to this question	3.1%
Total	100%

Table 5. Reasons for Not Using Support Services Provided by Job Coaches Stationed in Local Vocational Centers and by Type 1 Job Coaches (M.A., n=847)

Lack of the need to provide special accommodations to persons with disabilities they employ and their human resource management for ordinary employees being sufficiently effective for persons with disabilities	57.0%
Having already addressed human resource management for employees with disabilities and for staff with disabilities	25.7%
Having heard nothing about the system	24.9%
Difficult to entrust human resource management to any third party outside of the country	15.0%
Never recommended to use the system	11.9%
Having no disabled employee	9.7%
Being able to get support and help from other companies, industry associations and employer's associations for the employment of persons with disabilities	2.5%
Other reasons	5.7%
Companies that have never used service provided by Job Coaches stationed in Local Vocational Centers and by Type 1 Job Coaches	100%

Table 6. Comparison of Different Types of Supports (Unit: %, n=111)

	Had ever used such support services (a)		(b)/(a)	Never used such support services	
		Respondents found them effective (b)			Found these supports necessary for the company
Support for employers and employees/staff at workplaces					
Job coach support for special accommodations concerning disabilities	73.9	62.2	84.2	14.4	4.5
Job coach support for job analysis and development	46.8	38.7	82.7	33.3	9.9
Support for employees with disabilities and for staff with disabilities					
Support provided by Job Coaches for job-related capacity building	83.8	70.3	83.9	5.4	0.0
Job coach support for commuting and healthcare management	45.0	37.8	84.0	20.7	7.2
Job coach support for promoting cooperation with other employees and staff	67.6	54.1	80.0	11.7	4.5
Companies that have used support services provided by Job Coaches stationed in Local Vocational Centers and by Type 1 Job Coaches	100				

11.2% of the companies responding to this survey said that they had ever used extra-firm Job Coaches. Asked about the effectiveness of extra-firm Job Coaches (Table 6), a significant percentage (80.0 to 84.2%) of these companies that “had ever used such support services” found “these support services effective” (The value of (b)/(a) in Table 6). The largest percentage, or 83.8%, of them received “support provided by Job Coaches for job-related capacity building.” At the same time, the largest percentage of them cited, as “services they had never used,” “support provided by Job Coaches for job analysis and development.” Yet 9.9%, or nearly 10%, of the respondent companies said that “the service for job analysis and development was necessary” for them.

“Job coach support for job analysis and development” means support services designed to review job duties that are being carried out at workplaces in order to find jobs that persons with disabilities, for whom support is being sought, can readily perform, find jobs that persons with disabilities can perform merely with the aid of special accommodations in the

process of development of human resources and of job duties, and develop new job duties that contribute to profitability improvement of the entire section by helping coworkers with job duties. Generally, job opportunities information lists only core jobs as examples, while peripheral jobs around the said core jobs are often simply not specified. Unlike the U.S. companies that have to develop job descriptions in preparation for individual labor-related disputes, there is no need to develop such descriptions for Japanese companies. In some cases, it takes some time for newly hired employees to learn some details about peripheral job duties. “Job coach support for job analysis and development” consists of employment support services designed to facilitate the execution of job duties and human resource development by analyzing job duties and workplaces and clarifying the entire picture of them, including peripheral job duties, at earlier stages. This type of support has been carried out by Job Coaches stationed in Local Vocational Centers, as part of support provided through Local Vocational Centers for Persons with Disabilities, and has proved effective.

III. Integration between Employment Support and the Employment Quota System

In this section, I would like to discuss the relationship between the Employment Quota System and employment support already mentioned in this paper.

The specific operational procedures of the Employment Quota System consist of (i) Employment Situation Reports prepared by companies and (ii) Guidance for Meeting the Employment Quota provided by Hello Works. Employment support is to be carried out together with Guidance for Meeting the Employment Quota above mentioned.

1. Employment Situation Reports

The number of persons with disabilities to be hired in compliance with the Employment Quota System varies with companies. The law requires each company to submit, to Hello Work with jurisdiction, Employment Situation Reports which contain data on the number of the total employees and of persons with disabilities among them hired by each company as of June 1 each year.¹⁴ At the time of this paper being issued, the employment rate of handicapped persons set under Cabinet Order is 1.8%. Accordingly, any company that hires more than 55 employees, as 55 is the inverse number of 1.8%, is obliged to submit Employment Situation Reports. For example, a company with 100 employees is obliged to hire at least one person with disabilities because $100 \times 1.8\% = 1.8$. (Any digits after the decimal point shall be rounded down to zero.)

2. Guidance for Meeting the Employment Quota

Guidance for Meeting the Employment Quota consists of four stages: (i) an order to

¹⁴ Law for Employment Promotion etc., of the Disabled.

develop a three-year program, (ii) a recommendation to comply with the program, (iii) special guidance and (iv) announcement of the names of companies. Companies having failed to meet the quota are required to make efforts to promote the employment of persons with disabilities so that they can avoid progressing through all of these stages as far as possible. Hello Work shall require companies to comply with the legal employment rate and at the same time, shall provide employment support to companies through cooperation with Local Vocational Centers for Persons with Disabilities and other relevant agencies.¹⁵

(1) An Order to Develop a Three-Year Program and the Implementation of the Program

Companies having failed to meet the quota shall be ordered, in writing, by the Hello Work director with jurisdiction, to develop a three-year program aimed at the achievement of the required employment rate of persons with disabilities and submit the program to Hello Work, by following procedures established by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, if such companies meet certain conditions. When a three-year program submitted does not meet conditions established by the ministry, a company having submitted the program shall be required to prepare again and again a new program until it satisfies the requirements, and then shall be asked to put into practice the program.

However, not all of companies which have failed to comply with the stipulated employment quota shall receive this Order to Develop a Three-Year Program.

First, the companies that are required by the law to newly employ persons with disabilities are those which are willing to increase their staff or those willing to fill vacant posts following the resignation of staff.

Secondly, companies shall be ordered to develop a three-year program, when they satisfy the conditions stated in the above and at the same time, meet certain conditions established by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, (For example, a value obtained by subtracting the number of persons with disabilities now being employed by such a company from the number of employees with disabilities legally required is equal to or more than a certain value.) Authorities impose stricter requirements on companies following their revision in 2006. More precisely, (i) a company for which the legally required number of employees with disabilities is three or four and when it has actually employed none of them, (ii) a company where a value obtained by subtracting the number of persons with disabilities now being employed by such a company from the number of employees with disabilities legally required is equal to or more than 10 persons, or (iii) a company of whose Actual Employment

¹⁵ Local Vocational Centers for Persons with Disabilities and Employment and Life Support Centers for Persons with Disabilities have to report, to administrative agencies, the number of persons with disabilities subject to their support, the number of such persons being employed and the number of persons with disabilities whose employment is being maintained after a certain period of time. These figures will be annually published on web pages and by press lease, together with the performance of Hello Work, as part of the results of the government's employment promotion measures for persons with disabilities.

Rate is less than 1.2% and at the same time where a value obtained by subtracting the number of persons with disabilities now being employed by such a company from the number of employees with disabilities legally required is equal to or more than five, shall be subject to the above mentioned order. Furthermore, wording has been revised from “whose Actual Employment Rate is less than 1.2%,” as referred to in the above (iii), to “whose Actual Employment Rate is less than the national average value” following the revision in 2007.

During the first quarter of the second year in a three-year program, Hello Work shall in the name of its director, release the Hortative Document which explains that if the progress situation of the program fails to meet certain requirements,¹⁶ a company may undergo the next stage (Good Practice Recommendation), or the third stage (special guidance) or even the fourth stage (announcement of its name). In this way, companies are asked to comply with Employment Quota System.

(2) Good Practice Recommendation of a Three-Year Program and Special Guidance

When the second year in a three-year program is about to end, Hello Work shall, in the name of its director, make Good Practice Recommendation in writing to companies where the progress situation of the program fails to meet certain requirements. Then Hello Work shall, to companies where the progress situation of the program fails to meet certain requirements when the three-year program is completed, provide nine-month-long Special Guidance.¹⁷ This special guidance is designed to give a moratorium period to these companies in order to prevent these companies from progressing through the next stage, announcement of their names.

(3) Announcement of the Names of Companies

When a company fails to comply with certain requirements established by the ministry, for example, by having failed to achieve the stipulated employment quota even after having undergone the nine-month-long Special Guidance, the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare shall publicly announce the company name, the location of its head office, details of its business, the progress of Guidance for Meeting the Employment Quota and others. The content of the public announcement will be annually published on web pages or by press lease. While the announcement of the names of companies is one of the strongest measures, it is not a last resort measure. This is because, until such a company satisfies a specified quota concerning the employment of persons with disabilities, it shall continuously undergo Guidance for Meeting the Employment Quota provided by Hello Work and the company’s

¹⁶ This level is set at a level lower than the one required for the achievement of the stipulated employment rate of persons with disabilities.

¹⁷ Special Guidance shall start six months after the termination of a three-year program, and Hello Work is required to report to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare why the employment of persons with disability has not progressed in a company in question and improvement plans that Hello Work has developed and shall recommend to the company in question.

name and other data may be publicly announced again.

In 1975, the first public announcement ever of the names of companies took place for 115 companies. More recently, the number of companies whose names were publicly announced was on the decline, two companies in 2007, one company in 2008 and four in 2009. In addition, the company of which data was publicly announced in 2008 was the same company which was already named in the public announcement in 2006. Among the four companies publicly announced in 2009, one was ordered to prepare a three-year program for the fourth time and the remaining three were publicly announced after having undergone the recommendations and the guidance following an order to prepare a three-year program for the second time, individually.

IV. Conclusion

The employment support services are characterized as part of vocational rehabilitation. The Employment Quota System and vocational rehabilitation are sometimes considered as a “twin-track approach” and they are referred to as “two wheels of one cart.”

Strict measures taken by the administration against companies in accordance with the Employment Quota System are what are behind the comments listed at the beginning of this paper. Together with these measures, Hello Work provides employment support, including job placement services for persons with disabilities seeking employment at companies in question, job development, advices concerning special accommodations, provision of adequate description of characteristics of disabilities, and introduction of good practices conducted by other companies. Employment support is to be put into practice with the collaboration of the above mentioned Local Vocational Centers for Persons with Disabilities, Employment and Life Support Centers for Persons with Disabilities and other related agencies. Extra-firm Job Coaches are representative examples of employment support services.

The need for employment support provided by Job Coaches stationed in Local Vocational Centers and Type 1 Job Coaches in line with Guidance for Meeting the Employment Quota conducted by Hello Work will be on the rise in the future. In 2008, the Diet decided that the levies shall be collected from “an employer with more than 200 employees” starting from July 2010, and from “an employer with more than 100 employees” starting from 2015, instead of “an employer with more than 300 employees” under existing law. According to this, the levies shall be collected from companies with 101 to 300 employees as well, and attention will focus on what kind of effect the above revision will have in the future. Employment support services including the Job Coach System which is profoundly involved in workplaces will prove effective for expanding the competitive employment of persons with disabilities.

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