

# The “window workers” of Japan

## Vocabulary Match

unusual ●      traditional ●      rarely ●      senior ●      unfair ●      peace of mind ●

● not right      ● not often      ● strange      ● higher rank      ● old-style      ● feeling safe

## Article

In Japan, some older employees have a very unusual job: they are paid to do almost nothing! They are called *madogiwazoku*, or “window workers.”

Because of a traditional lifetime employment rule, companies rarely fire people. Instead of letting them go, bosses give these senior staff very easy tasks, like sorting mail or just checking a few emails. They spend most of their day sitting by the window, sipping tea and watching the world go by.

While younger staff might feel it's unfair, the system gives everyone peace of mind knowing their own jobs are safe for life.

## Quiz

1. What are older employees in Japan sometimes paid to do?
2. Why do companies rarely fire people?
3. What kind of tasks do senior staff get?
4. Why might younger staff feel the system is unfair?

## Conversation

- A: Did you hear about the “window workers”?
- B: Yeah, they get paid to do almost nothing!
- A: I wish I had a job like that!
- B: Me too. Just sitting by the window, sipping tea.
- A: Do you think they get bored?
- B: Maybe, but at least they have job security!

## Discussion

1. Would you like a job where you do almost nothing?
2. Do you think it's fair for older employees to have easy tasks?
3. What would you do if you had a lot of free time at work?
4. Make a list of easy and difficult jobs.