CHAPTER 10

An Online Elementary Business Japanese Course for Working Professionals in Michigan

Mariko Kawaguchi

Michigan State University

1 Introduction

This proposal is for the development of an online business Japanese course for working professionals in Michigan who have little or no prior knowledge of Japanese. Michigan is a hub of the automotive industry; according to the website of the Michigan Economic Development Cooperation (2014), Michigan is "home to headquarters of 61 of the top 100 automotive suppliers", many of which are Japanese companies. It is no surprise then that Japan is Michigan's number one foreign business partner. According to a survey conducted by the Consulate General of Japan in Detroit (2013), 37,020 people were hired by 469 different Japanese companies in Michigan. Because of these factors, this proposed course targets working professionals who work for Japanese companies or those who work with Japanese clients.

This course aims to provide an alternative way to learn business Japanese and increase the population of learners of Japanese in the region. While various opportunities are available to

learn business English, such as colleges and universities, private English language schools, textbooks, radio and TV programs, and online courses, opportunities to learn business Japanese in the United States are heavily concentrated on college and university courses targeting mainly pre-professional students. Often the classes are held during the day, and students are required to complete lower-level Japanese courses in order to enroll in a business Japanese course. However, working professionals tend to be older than typical undergraduate students, with work and family responsibilities, different educational backgrounds, and different places of residency. Consequently, daily class attendance or a commitment towards a long-term program is often not possible. Because of such situations, opportunities to learn Japanese for working professionals are few—not to mention business Japanese—even though Michigan is one of the several regions in the United States where learning business Japanese has very practical benefits.

To meet the needs of busy working professionals in Michigan who are absolute beginners of Japanese, the course that I am developing focuses on four characteristics: (a) flexibility; (b) efficiency; (c) day one business Japanese; and (d) culture. The online structure of the course will enable students to study at their convenience and their own pace without the need to commute to campus or adjust their already busy schedules. In order to minimize the burden on the learners, I suggest that the course focus on developing one's listening and speaking skills and provide instruction on reading and writing of Hiragana and Katakana characters as optional.

In addition, the textbook that I will suggest for the course, *Japanese for Busy People* (2006), has about a third of the vocabulary and grammar items that are introduced in a typical first-year college course. The dialogues of the textbook revolve around Japanese and non-

Japanese business professionals who work at the Tokyo branch of an American company, and introduce professional Japanese with a simple a sentence structure. For example, typical elementary-level textbooks of Japanese for general purposes introduce "mother" and "father" in the first few chapters, but this course will introduce terms like "boss" and "assistant" instead. Furthermore, the course focuses on the polite style of Japanese that is used in formal business situations and introduces the casual style of Japanese only as supplemental information.

Lastly, the culture section of the course will be equally important as the language section. The culture lessons cover such fields as international business, history, and cross-cultural communication, and will be conducted in English so that students will be able to broaden and deepen their knowledge and understanding of Japanese business culture without being impeded by limitations in their language knowledge. The language and culture curriculums will be connected. For example, some situations in dialogues or some of the culture elements introduced in the language lessons will be elaborated and investigated further in the cultural curriculum.

2 Needs Analysis

To analyze needs for this online business Japanese course for working professionals in Michigan, I collected three types of data: (a) research on existing business Japanese courses; (b) observations of Japanese companies in Michigan; and (c) a needs analysis survey of people who work for Japanese companies in Michigan. Each of these will be discussed briefly below.

Results of my initial research into existing business Japanese courses found that no colleges or universities in the Michigan area offer online business Japanese courses, although a

few universities offer traditional business Japanese courses (i.e. face-to-face class meetings during the day, with prerequisites of a few years of study). Likewise, no massive open online courses (MOOCs) such as *Coursera* currently offer Japanese or business Japanese. There are many YouTube videos, such as those created by the Japan Society in New York City, but they tend to teach Japanese for general purposes and merely introduce words and phrases only.

2.1 Site Observation Data

Following this preliminary analysis, I carried out site observations at two Japanese companies in Michigan at the time of this proposal. The first, Company T, is a place where I used to teach Japanese and also worked in the human resources department. The majority of my findings are based on my observations working there from 2005 to 2008, but information from a former colleague of mine confirmed that the company information and language training policies have not changed much in the time since.

Company T is one of the major auto manufacturers in the world, and their North American research and development center is located in Michigan. Company T has about 800 employees, and about 80 are expatriates from Japan. These expatriates' tenures at Company T vary, but the average tenure is three years. They also have native-speakers of Japanese who are hired locally. Company T is one of a few Japanese companies in Michigan that consistently offer Japanese classes to employees. The company outsources Japanese teaching to a private company and offers four or five sessions of Japanese classes throughout the year, with a summer session that may or may not be offered depending on interest. The classes meet three days a week from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. for eight weeks. There are a few levels offered in each session; the lowest

level has the highest enrollment (about 8-12 students), with class sizes becoming smaller with each successive level.

The company offers Japanese classes to their employees at no charge, but the employees have to spend their lunch breaks attending class. There is also no system to reward employees for passing the class. The textbook used for the classes is *Japanese for Busy People* (2006), which is designed for working professionals in general. Some students at Company T have expressed their need to learn engineering vocabulary and expressions in Japanese, but no classes or materials have been provided to meet such a need. The instructors dispatched from the private company do not have experience with engineering, and there are not enough students who are engineers with a foundation in Japanese to integrate engineering terms in the Japanese lessons. The private company that offers Japanese classes also does not train the instructors systematically, so the quality of education among the instructors varies.

Company T regularly sends its employees to its headquarters in Japan; some for a few weeks, and some for one or two years. For the long-term assignees, the company hires the same language training company and provides the assignees and their families with private Japanese lessons, starting six months before their assignments. The tutoring is free for the assignees and their family members, and the assignees receive some work-leave to study Japanese (up to four hours a day).

I also visited a second company, Company D, which is one of the major automobile parts manufacturers in Michigan. I spoke with a former student of mine who worked in the human

resources department of this company and with two of her colleagues. About 900 people work in the facility that I visited, and about 190 of them are expatriates from Japan on short-term (i.e., a few years) assignments. There are also locally hired Japanese people who work there.

This company also sends American employees to the headquarters in Japan for assignments ranging over various periods of time, but the company provides them with no Japanese language training prior to their assignments. Company D offers various classes during lunchtime, but it has never offered Japanese language classes. However, the new employees are required to take a class about Japanese culture during the orientation. The class covers basic information about Japan, such as where it is located, and several differences between Japanese and American cultures.

The training classes are offered in a similar format to Company T, with the employees able to take the classes at no charge, but only if they do so during their lunch break. Also at Company D, when the employees take and pass job-related classes offered by colleges and universities, the company reimburses the tuition costs.

2.2 Survey Data

The last form of data gathering I conducted was in the form of a needs analysis survey of people who work for Japanese companies in Michigan. I created the survey to ask the employers the following questions: (a) what kind of role does Japanese language play at your company; (b) whether their company has offered Japanese language classes; and (c) which areas of Japanese language class they think are important (see Appendix A). Initially, I contacted Japanese

companies in Michigan using the Japan Business Society of Detroit's member list. However, many companies' websites do not have a general inquiry email address, and even when I contacted those companies that did have general inquiry contact information, I received no response. As an alternative, I asked my acquaintances and former students who worked for Japanese companies in Michigan to answer the questionnaire or forward the questionnaire to others in their companies. As a result, I received five responses from employers. The responders happened to be all native speakers of Japanese.

I also created a similar survey for my American friends and former students who worked for a Japanese company in Michigan (Appendix B). My initial attempt was to contact a few Japanese companies in Michigan and conduct a large-scale survey of all of their employees. However, the companies I contacted through my personal connections were reluctant to help my survey, so instead I decided to ask the people I knew who worked for a Japanese company in Michigan and who had studied Japanese. It was unfortunate that I could not collect data from the actual target population for the course, but as the survey responders were familiar with colleagues who did not speak Japanese and furthermore knew the importance of learning Japanese, they were able to provide very helpful insights.

- Based on the results of the data gathered during the different stages of the needs analysis, the following main themes were identified: Among Japanese companies in Michigan, two groups of people—Japanese and American—two languages, and two cultures appear to co-exist in their workplaces, though how often and how much American employees interact with native Japanese speakers varies considerably.

- In order to motivate the target population to take this kind of course, some sort of incentives will be necessary (e.g. company covering tuition). The course should be promoted first to employers and then to their employees with some company-specific incentives.

- The survey participants think that Japanese is a difficult language to master, and they do not expect the course participants to conduct any substantial business tasks in Japanese. Rather, they expect the course participants to use some Japanese as "an ice-breaker," "to show interest in/respect for Japanese culture," and to build rapport with Japanese-speaking coworkers and clients.

- The survey participants think that learning Hiragana and Katakana characters will not have many immediate practical benefits because almost all Japanese sentences contain a mixture of Hiragana, Katakana, and Kanji, and Kanji are widely used to represent content words. Their opinions support my suggestion that the course should focus on speaking and listening and optionally introduce Hiragana and Katakana.

- To work with Japanese coworkers and clients, it is important to "understand Japanese work style, communication styles, etc." and to bring down "cultural barriers." Therefore, the survey participants seemed to have high expectations for the culture section of the course. Excelling in this area will make this course distinguished from other business Japanese courses.

3 Student Learning Outcomes

In order to draft student learning outcomes (SLO), I used three sources of information: (a) the needs analysis findings; (b) the content of the suggested textbook, *Japanese for Busy*

People (2006); and (c) the ACTFL Standards for Foreign Language Learning (2010). SLOs should ideally be derived from findings of needs analysis, as in course development it is crucial to understand what students want and/or need to be able to do after completing a course. Examining the textbook helped me specify language skills students are expected to acquire, and the ACTFL Standards (2010) were helpful in to drafting outcomes related to the acquisition of cultural knowledge. In addition, I will team up with a faculty member who is an expert of Japanese culture, and they will develop the culture curriculum and draft more detailed student learning outcomes for that particular section. Below are projected student learning outcomes in broader, descriptive terms.

The first outcome is that the course should aim to teach busy working professionals who have little or no prior knowledge of Japanese language some basic Japanese greetings and basic conversation in speaking formats. After successfully completing the course, students should be able to understand and use frequently used phrases and sentences related to telling and asking personal information, time, numbers, and prices.

The second identified outcome is that this course will also teach Japanese business culture, in terms of the relationship between different cultural practices (e.g., how Japanese people behave in business settings) and perspectives (e.g., why behaviors are different), as well as relationship between products (e.g., both tangible things such as business cards and intangible things such as the expatriate employee system) and perspectives (e.g., why such products are created and sustained). After successfully completing the course, students should be able to effectively apply their understanding of Japanese business culture in appropriate settings.

Lastly, outcomes will focus on the notion that even though substantial business tasks with Japanese coworkers and clients will be conducted mostly in English, students should be able to use the acquired Japanese language skills and cultural understanding to establish positive relationships with Japanese coworkers and clients.

4 Materials and Curriculum

I suggest that the course cover the first five lessons in *Japanese for Busy People* (2006) and culture lessons over eight to ten weeks. I created teaching materials from *Japanese for Busy People* (2006) Lessons One through Five, and will publish them on the course site, Desire to Learn. The structure of the course site is shown in Appendix C.

A proficiency-oriented approach (Hadley, 1993) will be used for this course. Below is a summary of what proficiency-oriented language instruction is, as stated by the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, University of Minnesota:

Proficiency-oriented language instruction is a general framework for organizing instruction, curriculum, and assessment, rather than a method or a theory. Within this framework, language learners practice the four modalities (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in order to communicate meaningfully, effectively, and creatively in their target language for real-life purposes. A proficiency orientation promotes intercultural communication by exploring the mosaic of language and culture, so that students can communicate appropriately and accurately in authentic contexts in the foreign language. Proficiency-based instruction is student-centered and builds upon what students need,

already know, and can do, and it respects diverse learning styles, while encouraging the development of a wide range of skills and learning strategies. ("CARLA", n.d.)

The vocabulary, linguistic functions, and dialogues will be introduced in short videos. To accommodate students' busy schedule and different paces of learning, students can watch the videos repeatedly at their convenience. The videos include examples in which various people perform the dialogues, so that students can learn non-verbal communicative information as well as linguistic knowledge.

The lessons also have some additional information and practice beyond what the textbook covers. For example, the course introduces more vocabulary of nationalities and job titles. While Dialogue 3 in Lesson One covers only how to tell who you are and who you have come to see over an intercom, the course will include content on how to perform similar tasks over a phone (e.g., *moshi-moshi* (hello) is a greeting used only when one answers a phone call). Also, at the end of each lesson, there will be a few additional practices for students to use the target language with native speakers of Japanese. Students will be encouraged to conduct role-plays and tasks such as introducing themselves to their Japanese business partners and asking about their Japanese colleagues' work schedules. Of course, not all students will be able to easily find native Japanese speakers to practice with, so these activities will not be mandatory or directly assessed. Instead, they are meant to provide some practical ideas about how to use the target language in real-life situations.

Although online learning has many advantages, potential drawbacks revolve around the lack of personal interaction between the instructors and students, as well as among students. To account for this, the course will offer two platforms for student interactions:

- Discussion forum: Students and the instructors can discuss the Japanese language and culture. Students will be encouraged to ask questions as well as share their knowledge and opinions.

- Online dropbox: Students can post their self-introduction message (e.g., from Lesson One), hours of their favorite restaurants and prices of some dishes (e.g., from Lessons Three & Four), etc. Other students will be able to see the postings and comment on them.

This course targets at a specific group of people—people who work for Japanese companies in Michigan or people who wish to enter this job field. Although it is necessary to draw a fine line between encouraging student interactions and protecting student privacies, students who have common purposes and interests may be able to build new business relationships and opportunities through participating in these activities.

5 Assessment and Evaluation

In order to assess students' proficiency from different angles as well as to accommodate students' diverse learning styles, a variety of assessments will be given using both oral and written channels. At the end of each lesson video, students will take quizzes. The quiz formats will include such things as multiple-choice questions, cloze-type passages, short answers, the submission of recorded speeches and/or videos, and the writing of short essays. The purpose of these quizzes is to have students practice the target language skills, so their work should be auto-

corrected or evaluated on submission only. That way, students will have immediate feedback and the language instructor will not be overwhelmed with correcting the quizzes manually.

After the end of each lesson or a few lessons combined, students will take achievement tests. The formats of the tests will be similarly diverse as the quizzes, and use a combination of computer-based auto-correction and manual correction by the language instructor. Because the quizzes and tests will be given online, it will be difficult to regulate the degree to which students refer to their textbook and notes while taking a test, although it will be possible to account for this by implementing restricted response times when necessary.

Student-teacher one-on-one oral tests via Skype or similar video-conferencing applications will be given twice during the course. One task will be to introduce each other, while the other task will be to conduct a role-play using the context of shopping.

Even though my understanding of the Japanese culture curriculum is limited, possible assessments of that section might include answering a set of questions after reading/watching cultural learning materials, participating in culture discussions, or writing a paper to analyze an aspect of Japanese culture.

In the first year offering of the course, we will need to be conservative with our choice of platforms and grading styles. Since all the assessments will be given online, we want to use only the platforms that are known to be working effectively. That might limit the types of assessments available, but over time we will be better at selecting appropriate tools for specific

activities/assessments and instructing students on how to use these tools. Also, we do not know how many students will be enrolled and how they will participate in the course; therefore it is safe to have individual students work on their own and have their work evaluated by the instructors. In the future, however, the course could include more alternatives in assessment such as group work or peer evaluation.

Finally, the instructors will examine student performance on tests, quizzes, and other assignments, and will apply these findings to evaluate the effectiveness of the course with the aim of making improvements and adjustments in the future. At the end of the course, students will also complete course evaluations. The instructors will be especially eager to gather student feedback about what they liked about the course, what they did not like about it, if they experienced any technical difficulties, if instructions about how to use online tools were clear, and how they think the course can be improved.

6 Conclusion

Developing a new course for a new target population is a lot of work, but is has great potential. There are two benefits for language educators. If the course succeeds, it will bring new revenue to the program, department, and university. Offering a course to working professionals will lead to an increase in population of learners of the language. This point is important because Japanese is one of the recognized Less Commonly Taught Languages in the U.S., and if people do not have a chance to learn it in school, they are less likely to learn it after graduating. As for benefits for the professional world, being able to communicate with Japanese coworkers and clients in Japanese will increase workers' job productivity, satisfaction, and employability.

Michigan's relationship with Japanese businesses can only improve as more of its workers gain an understanding of Japanese language and culture.

Several limitations and constraints must be considered in the development of this course, in particular limitations in regards to institutional support, technical issues, and human resources. First, as the course could be offered by several departments, including the language department, the business school, or extension services, the course needs to follow the rules and policies of the unit that will offer the course. Also, as mentioned in the needs assessment section, some incentives from Japanese companies in Michigan will be crucial to promote the course to the target population. It is also not yet known how the course will be marketed.

The second main constraint is about the online course site. Even though I have already published sample teaching and assessment materials on the course site of my university, the decision to use the university course site or a third party interface is still under discussion, and each interface presents unique features and constraints. For example, the university course site currently does not have a function to give a question orally while showing a visual cue.

Lastly, developing and teaching the course will be additional work for the faculty members who are already busy teaching existing courses and serving other duties. How much they can commit to the business Japanese course depends on whether they will receive a salary increase, release from existing workload, or additional staff.

During this process, my thoughts have grown toward the idea that establishing a language for specific purposes course requires developing a niche market in foreign language teaching, and the most important thing in the development process is to connect with the specific group of people who need our product. We need first to understand what potential students want from a language class. In addition, we should know about the people with whom the students interact using the language. Then, we should develop student learning outcomes, curriculum and teaching materials, and testing and evaluation materials around the needs of these people, and seek feedback from potential students and/or colleagues in each area of development. Once the course is offered, it is important to check students' progress and feedback, and apply the findings to improve the course. Although the development of my course has just begun, I'm going to stay connected with my future students and continue to develop the course to ensure its success.

Needs Assessment Survey for Japanese Employers with Responses (*N* = 5)

Q1. What kind of industry is your company classified as (e.g. auto parts maker)?
Q2. About how many employees do your have at your office?
Q3. Among them, about how many native speakers of Japanese do you have in your office?
Q4. About how many non-native speakers of Japanese do you have in your office?

Responder	Industry type	Total # of employees*	# of JPN employees	# of non-JPN employees
1	automotive supplier	1200	150	1050
2	auto parts maker	830	12	818
3	auto parts maker tier 1 supplier	300	16	~280
4	auto parts supplier	30	3	0
5	automotive electronics parts manufacturer	22	11	11

Note. * Some responders provided the numbers of their team or department.

Q5. What role do you think Japanese language plays in your company? (Check all that apply.)
- It is used in communication between employees who are native speakers of Japanese. - 3
- It is used in communication between native-speaking employees and non-native speaking employees. - 1
- It is used in correspondences from/to the headquarters in Japan (e.g. memos, manuals). - 5
- It is used in communication with customers/clients who are native speakers of Japanese. - 5
- Other - 0

Q6. Has your company provided your employees with opportunities to learn Japanese in the past or currently?
Yes - 4, No - 1

Q7. If yes, how has your company provided opportunities to learn Japanese? (Check all that apply.)
- Offered private/semi-private/group classes developed and taught by your company. - 2
- Offered private/semi-private/group classes developed and taught by a private company. - 1
- Provided self-study materials (e.g. Rosetta Stone, Pimsleuer, Japanese textbooks). - 1
- Encouraged the employees to take classes at college/university/cities and towns. - 2
- Other - 2 (An American employee who spoke Japanese independently created a curriculum; tuition reimbursement)

Q8. I am developing an online business Japanese course for working professionals who have little or no prior knowledge of Japanese. Do you think your company and/or employees will be interested in this kind of course?
Yes - 4, No - 1

Q9. If Yes, how likely do you think your coworkers consider the following options?
(1) extremely unlikely (2) unlikely (3) more likely than not (4) likely (5) very likely
(6) extremely likely

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
The company will cover the full or partial tuition if the employees wish to take the course.		1		1	1	1
The company will allow the employees some time off to study Japanese (e.g. If their working hours is 8 hours, 1 hour a day is allocated to study Japanese).	1	2		1		
When the employees complete the course, the company will consider it as a factor for salary raise and/or promotion.	1	1		1	1	
The company will recommend that the employees take the course at their own expense.		2	1	1		

Q10. Please rate the following areas of study in terms of possible benefits employees might get from the course. (1) not at all beneficial (2) slightly beneficial (3) beneficial (4) fairly beneficial (5) very beneficial (6) no opinion

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Greetings in Japanese		1	1		3	
Basic conversation (e.g. self-introduction, shopping)		1	2		2	
Reading Hiragana and Katakana		3		1	1	
Writing Hiragana and Katakana		2	1	1	1	
Business Japanese culture (e.g. how to give and receive a business card, history of Japanese auto business in the Midwest)			1		4	
Other						

Q11. If you have any ideas, requests, and concerns about the course I am developing, please share.

- If a person can speak Japanese, it is difficult to utilize it at business situation without understanding difference of culture. As a Japanese native speaker, I think Japanese culture is very unique, if a person wants to use Japanese for business, understanding culture is more useful than reading & writing hiragana/katakana.

- Not many Americans are able to handle business Japanese. However, since Japanese ex-pats are struggling with English all day every day, it would be a nice gesture for Americans to learn about Japanese culture or at least learn some Japanese phrases in return.

- Please let me know when the course is offered.

Q12. Please tell us about yourself.

(The responders' personal information is not shared in this report.)

Is it okay to contact you for follow-up questions? Yes -4, No - 0, no answer - 1

As part of the piloting process, I might ask you to sample the materials at your workplace.

Would you be interested? Yes - 3, No - 1, no answer - 1

Appendix B

Needs Assessment Survey for American Employees with Responses (*N* = 7)

Q1. What kind of industry is your company classified as (e.g. auto parts maker)?
Q2. About how many employees do your have at your office?
Q3. Among them, about how many native speakers of Japanese do you have in your office?
Q4. About how many non-native speakers of Japanese do you have in your office?

Responder	Industry type	Total # of employees	# of JPN employees	# of non-JPN employees
1	automotive – original equipment manufacturer	800	150	30
2	auto parts maker	~900[a]	~150[b]	~4
3	automotive parts & components manufacturer	100	20	3
4	automotive supplier / parts maker	65	1	1
5	automotive interiors	32	15	4
6	auto parts trading	28	14	14
7	auto parts maker	11	6	5

Note. * Some responders provided the numbers of their team or department. [a] Reported that 88% of these worked in the same department. [b] Reported that six of these were local Japanese citizens.

Q5. What role do you think Japanese language plays in your company? (Check all that apply.)
▪ It is used in communication between employees who are native speakers of Japanese. - 7
▪ It is used in communication between native-speaking employees and non-native speaking employees. - 7
▪ It is used in correspondences from/to the headquarters in Japan (e.g. memos, manuals). - 6
▪ It is used in communication with customers/clients who are native speakers of Japanese. - 7
▪ Other - 0

Q6. Has your company provided your employees with opportunities to learn Japanese in the past or currently?
Yes - 4, No - 3

Q7. If yes, how has your company provided opportunities to learn Japanese? (Check all that apply.)

- Offered private/semi-private/group classes developed and taught by your company.
- Offered private/semi-private/group classes developed and taught by a private company. - 2
- Provided self-study materials (e.g. Rosetta Stone, Pimsleuer, Japanese textbooks). - 1
- Encouraged the employees to take classes at college/university/cities and towns.
- Other - 1: Not sure

Q8. I am developing an online Business Japanese course for working professionals who have little or no prior knowledge of Japanese. Do you think your coworkers will be interested in this kind of course?

Yes - 6, No - 1

Q9. If Yes, how likely do you think your coworkers consider taking the course if the following conditions are met? (1) extremely unlikely (2) unlikely (3) more likely than not (4) likely (5) very likely (6) extremely likely

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
The company will cover the full or partial tuition if the employees wish to take the course.			2	2	1	1
The company will allow the employees some time off to study Japanese (e.g. If their working hours is 8 hours, 1 hour a day is allocated to study Japanese).		2		2	2	
When the employees complete the course, the company will consider it as a factor for salary raise and/or promotion.		1	1	3		1
The company will recommend that the employees take the course at their own expense.	2	3	1			

Q10. Please rate the following areas of study in terms of possible benefits employees might get from the course. (1) not at all beneficial (2) slightly beneficial (3) beneficial (4) fairly beneficial (5) very beneficial (6) no opinion

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Greetings in Japanese		1	2	2	2	
Basic conversation (e.g. self-introduction, shopping)		1	1	4	1	
Reading Hiragana and Katakana	2	2	2	1		
Writing Hiragana and Katakana	2	2	2	1		
Business Japanese culture (e.g. how to give and receive a business card, history of Japanese auto business in the Midwest)			1	4	2	
Other						

Q11. If you have any ideas, requests, and concerns about the course I am developing, please share.

- Japanese is offered for free at our company, based on 3x week 1-hour lunch sessions, using a text book (Japanese for Busy People), and with homework. Interest rises and falls. Younger employees try it, and then realize they will never speak it well enough to carry on basic conversations. By the time they move up, they realize there is no point to continuing. The course should be clear about its mission: that the Japanese learned will mostly be useful as an ice-breaker, to show interest in/respect for Japanese culture - but will never bring anyone up to the point that the student will ever have a business conversation in Japanese. A few learn some kanji, which can be useful, and some will eventually require some Japanese in preparation for training stays in Japan (even they do not retain it or use it after return, as a rule).

- This type of course may be useful for people who deal with Japanese customers (of which there are probably many in the auto industry, as well as employees who plan to go on business trips to Japan (long/short term). Also, it would help bring down cultural barriers of which there are many. In general, non-Japanese do not understand Japanese work style, communication styles, etc.

- For Beginners it may be too much effort going outside of greetings and business card exchanges. I feel what would be more useful is Japanese business culture and how to interact with the Japanese employees. For people like myself who have studied Japanese for a while, I feel what would be most needed is more help with email writing, industry specific/business specific vocabulary, and keigo.

▪ How much of the class will deal with actual business oriented words and phrases vs. just basic Japanese, and does there need to be a distinction? Mostly vocabulary or grammatical concerns, whether the students will find the class has the information they might need to effectively communicate (to an extent) with/in Japan.

▪ To be honest, I think the course is a very good idea, but my current company may not be the best match. Other than myself, few people in my office work with our Japanese office and those who do can always use English. Because nobody in my office ever expects to live in Japan or to really need Japanese, there would not be much interest in a course. For other companies, however, I think this would be a good fit.

▪ It would be nice to have a more detailed version of what the course may look like.

Q12. Please tell us about yourself.
* The responders' personal information is not shared in this report.
Is it okay to contact you for follow-up questions? Yes - 6, No - 0

Appendix C

Course Syllabus

Language section	Lesson 1	Vocabulary
		Function 1: Introducing Yourself
		  Video lectures, examples, & practices
		  Quizzes
		Function 2: Introducing Other People
		Function 3: Asking & Answering Yes/No Questions
		Function 4: Telling One's Affiliation
		Dialogue 1: Introducing One Another
		Dialogue 2: At a Reception Desk of a Company
		Dialogue 3: Using an Intercom and a Telephone
		Function 1: Introducing Yourself

	Lesson 2	Vocabulary Function 1: Indicating Objects Using "This/That" Function 2: Asking & Answering "What" Questions Function 3: Using Negations Function 4: Stating the Owner of an Object Function 5: Telling One's Telephone Number Dialogue 1: Exchanging Business Cards Dialogue 2: Whose Planner Is This? Dialogue 3: What Is Your Phone Number?
	Lesson 3	Vocabulary Function 1: Telling Time Function 2: Telling Business Hours Dialogue 1: What Time Is It? Dialogue 2: Hours of Facilities/Services of a Hotel
	Lesson 4	Vocabulary Function 1: Telling Prices of Items Function 2: Using "Also" Function 3: Conducting a Shopping Dialogue 1: Shopping in a Department Store Dialogue 2: Can I Use a Credit Card?
	Lesson 5	Function 1: Describe Items Using "This/That Item" Function 2: Describe Items Using Adjectives Function 3: Describe Items Using Country of
	Manufacture	Function 4: Using Counters Dialogue 1: How Much Is That Blue T-Shirt? Dialogue 2: I'd Like Three Cream Puffs, Please.
Culture section		Reading and Writing Hiragana & Katakana (optional)