

**Mr. Ito Junichi, CEO of World Link Japan, Inc.** who lives and works in Vietnam nearly 20 years.

I was born in Hokkaido in 1946 when Japan had just been out of wars. Japan in my childhood was much poorer than your country now. We did not have food, clothes, shoes or slippers. Slippers if we had were made by rubber, clothes were having holes,...When I was a child I felt normal but with my parents, it must be very headache. When I was in elementary school, I remembered the most delicious food was banana which just had in Sport Day in school, on that day, parents brought best food to encourage their children.

After that Japan developed rapidly. Due to the war in Korea, then the war in Vietnam, people had food, clothes. One thing was that 300 years ago Japan could produce steel. There were many small enterprises, many economic models existing long time– which were basic foundation of market economy so that we could easily develop after wars.

I remembered that my parents both worked. My mom worked at market, cutting and cleaning fish from early morning until late evening. When my mom came back home around 9 – 10 pm, I run out to hold her and still felt fish smell from her clothes. My parents worked very hard to have food. The whole Japan, everyone worked hard like that, it was very natural thing.

On spirit, Japanese was much impressed by Samurai. Right at young age, that spirit taught me to decide my own things. My mom always taught me not to do wrong thing in life because God saw everything. With Samurai spirit, could not do bad thing, no steal, and must always be honest. With Japanese, Samurai spirit means must take right actions. That was very good for manufacturing activities, because in manufacturing activities must do right and accurate things (could not have mistake,...)

Vietnam, Japan, Korea, and Japan have some similar things: use chop sticks, being affected by Buddhism, and Confucianism,...

**When I first came to Vietnam 20 years ago, I felt that Vietnamese were also hard working people like Japanese. But now I don't have that feeling. I am feeling that Vietnamese people prefer to earn much money but not through hard working as 20 years ago. Many people just like trading, find an easy way to earn money instead of hard working.**

**Another thing I feel that Vietnamese people usually have a look down to manual laborers who prefer to work as welders, workers. Many young people like to work in convenient offices, air-conditioned buildings.**

**It's very funny. Vietnamese government says that would like to develop industries, however young people look down on manual workers. So until when that country can have developed industries. Many Japanese companies would like to send their staff to factories to directly instruct to workers but the young would not like to do so.**

**When I was young, there were many Japanese people working in factories. And Japanese respected manual laborers because they were really have skills. We respect people who directly create a spoon, glasses – thanks to their skills. Japanese don't like people who just prefer to work in offices. We consider them like “verbal traders” to earn money, do not have any skill.**

**In Vietnam I see that young people like dreaming. They prefer to give order/request to other people, do not like to receive order/request. Young people should think about feeling of workers who working at factories, what do they think? To know that they must experience working in factories in advance.**

**In Tokyo, the most famous university is Tokyo University. When students of this university come to work in the city railway company, the first job they have to experience is cleaning toilets or cutting tickets. They must learn about manual working. They must experience job from lowest position before becoming managers. I feel pretty that here is quite different that is a very big shortcoming of society.**

**When I graduated from Tokyo University, my first job was sharpening pencils to people who were working in offices. Every day, I must come to office 30 minutes earlier than others to do that job then cutting telex, distributed them all to everyone.**

**Young people who haven't got experience yet, they should start from doing very small thing. In Vietnam nowadays, there are many people graduated from universities, even many have MBA but they have never been touch to manual work, they just reading on papers, reading books, but not understand about reality.**

**When I joined meetings with people in securities, banking,...to discuss about investing into a factory. They need money to invest into a factory but they do not understand about raw material, manufacturing process or market. When I asked, they said “my manager asked me to do so”. Those people just understand the top, they forget that to understand a very small thing, a thing from bottom is very important.**

**Vietnam's education is having diverse universities but professional training is still very bad. Vietnam's educational system just have people who are very good at doing tests but forget people who are not good at doing tests but are very good at working skills. Vietnam's educational system should create more chances to such people.**

**Recorded by Thanh Tuan**