

Osaka Company Provides Beer Perks

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. **perk** (noun): a benefit one receives as part of one's job; an advantage or benefit. Example: Having a company car is one of the perks of my job.
2. **hangover** (noun): a feeling of sickness caused by drinking too much alcohol. Example: Michael had a terrible hangover after a night of heavy drinking.
3. **penalty** (noun): a punishment for breaking a rule, law, or contract. Example: The penalty for breaking the law could include up to one year in prison or a \$50,000 fine.
4. **policy** (noun): a plan or rule put in place or proposed by an organization or government. Example: Critics say the policy could have severe side effects on the building industry.
5. **shortage** (noun): a state in which there is not enough of something. Example: New visa rules have been introduced to address the shortage of skilled labor.



Some companies offer perks to attract workers, such as lots of vacation days or being able to wear what you want. But one Japanese company is taking things to the next level by letting its employees drink at work and even letting them take time off for hangovers. Trust Ring, a tech company in Osaka, has a beer tap and other alcoholic drinks in the office that its employees can drink anytime they want. And if employees drink too much, they can take "hangover leave" the next day. Instead of starting work at 9 a.m., they can come in at noon without any penalties.

Trust Ring's unusual workplace policies don't stop there either. If anyone is late to work, as a "penalty," they have to say something nice about their coworkers in front of everyone. "We won't

forgive you until you say it," the policy playfully says. These policies might be unusual, but they appear to be working well. Japan is facing a worker shortage as birth rates decrease, and companies are now having a difficult time attracting young employees.

Trust Ring doesn't appear to have any issues attracting and retaining employees. According to the company, no one has left in the past three years, even though it pays its staff just 220,000 yen (less than \$1,500) a month. This is much less than the 300,000 yen (\$2,000) that the average person in their 20s makes in Japan. The company believes that the fun working environment makes up for the lower pay. Trust Ring's CEO Daigaku Shimada told Kansai TV that flexibility and a happy workplace can make all the difference.

Trust Ring's CEO, Daigaku Shimada, told Kansai TV that flexibility and a happy workplace can make all the difference. The company believes that having a fun working environment helps attract and retain employees. Trust Ring has implemented policies like allowing employees to drink at work and offering "hangover leave" to create a positive atmosphere. Despite the lower pay compared to other companies, no one has left Trust Ring in the past three years. Shimada thinks that a happy workplace is not just about money but also about flexibility and a positive environment.

Some employees believe that a fun working environment can make a significant difference in job satisfaction. Trust Ring's policies are designed to create a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere for its workers. The company provides perks such as a beer tap in the office and the ability to take "hangover leave." These policies seem to be working well, as no employees have left the company in the past three years. Trust Ring's approach shows that workplace happiness can come from flexibility and a positive environment, not just from higher salaries.

DISCUSSION

1. What are your thoughts on Trust Ring's unusual policies?
2. Are there many young employees at your workplace?
3. Would you describe your working environment as fun?
4. Do you agree that workplace happiness isn't just about money?
5. What are the main perks of your job?
6. Which of the places you've worked was the most fun?
7. How flexible is your working schedule?