

Many Grads Leave First Jobs

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. **ministry** (noun) /'mɪn.ɪ.stri/ – A government department that deals with a specific area.
Example: The Ministry of Health shared new data about workers in Japan.
2. **vocational** (adjective) /vəʊ'keɪ.jən.əl/ – Education that teaches skills for a specific job.
Example: Students at vocational schools learn practical skills like cooking or fixing cars.
3. **workforce** (noun) /'wɜ:k.fɔ:s/ – All the people in a country who are able to work.
Example: Many high school students enter the workforce immediately after they graduate.
4. **industry** (noun) /'ɪn.də.stri/ – A specific type of business or trade.
Example: The food and hospitality industry includes restaurants and hotels.
5. **departure** (noun) /dɪ'pɑ:.tʃər/ – The act of leaving a place or a job.
Example: The high departure rate shows that many young workers are unhappy.
6. **retail** (noun) /'ri:.teɪl/ – The activity of selling goods to the public in shops.
Example: Working in retail often involves helping customers and standing for a long time.
7. **employment** (noun) /ɪm'plɔɪ.mənt/ – The state of having a paid job.
Example: In 2025, the employment rate for new graduates in Japan was almost 100%.



Your first job after university is a very important step for your future. However, this does not mean you must stay at that company forever. New data from the Japanese government shows that many young people leave quickly. About one-third of university graduates quit their first job within three years. This trend is becoming more common among young workers today. In March 2022, around 450,000 university students started their new careers. By March 2025, nearly 34% of these people had already left. It is not only university students who are choosing to change jobs. Students from vocational schools and junior colleges leave even more often. In fact, 45% of those students quit their positions within three years.

High school graduates also enter the workforce in large numbers every year. In 2022, almost 137,000 high school students went straight to work. By the year 2025, about 38% of them had stopped working at those jobs. This shows that many young people are looking for better opportunities early. Changing jobs is no longer seen as a bad thing in Japan.

Some industries find it much harder to keep their workers than others. The food and hospitality industry has the highest number of people leaving. Around 55% of graduates quit these jobs within the first three years. Other industries, like beauty salons and movie theaters, have similar problems. Workers in these areas often find the environment or the hours very difficult.

The education and medical sectors are better at keeping their employees. Even so, 44% of teachers and 41% of medical workers still leave. However, Japan has a very high employment rate of 98% for new graduates. This means that almost every student who wants a job can find one. It is a great time to be a graduate looking for work.

DISCUSSION

1. If you quit a job after only one year, would you feel like a failure or like a person looking for a better life?
2. Why do you think more people quit jobs in restaurants than in schools or hospitals?
3. In your country, is it normal to stay at one company for your whole life, or do people change often?
4. If you could create a "dream company," what one thing would you do to make sure young workers never want to leave?
5. Imagine you are a boss and 50% of your workers quit. What is the first question you would ask the workers who stayed?
6. Is a high employment rate (98%) always a good thing, or can it cause problems for companies?
7. If you had to choose between a job you love with low pay or a job you dislike with very high pay, which would you pick and why?