

INNA's



DIARY

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Japan is a very hospitable country. Japanese customer service that combines exceptional courtesy and a unique ability to pay attention to detail can leave no one indifferent. Good Service is being taken for granted, as well as to all good things.

Japanese people and living here foreigners, take Japanese [The Customer is God] for granted. And only when you move to another country you begin to yearn for things that once seemed so natural, that you had already stopped valuing it.

10 items of Japanese-style service surprised me:

1. Recently, I rented a car using a car rental internet site. I filled out the application with my name and other data as was necessary. When we arrived at the rental car office, a navigation system in the car had already been exposed to English. (Finally we asked to turn it back, as in Japanese it was somehow familiar.).

Anyway, I was very impressed with such kind of care to foreigners.

2. Continuing with the car theme, could not fail to mention about the service at gas stations. While you're putting gas, the workers carefully clean windows of your car, politely offered to throw garbage and empty an ashtray. Then they make a deep bow and stemmed the flow of cars, helping you to merge into the traffic stream seamlessly.

3. Female bellhops - a common practice of hotels in Japan.

After gave you a deep bow they smile amiably, fragile girl easy lift heavy loads in each hand and with the same smile ready to accompany you to the Registration Desk. Many times I have seen Russian men were a little shocked by this view. Taking bags back they explained in Russian: "What are you doing? It's so heavy! I'll carry by myself "

I noticed that the Japanese take the service like this for granted and let ladies do their work

conscientiously.

(Though I put this item in the list, I do not welcome such service and think that carrying heavy bags it is not women's job)

#### 4. Packaging of purchases made on a rainy day.

When you buy something in a store on a rainy day, a bagged goods will be covered with a plastic bag to protect main bag from getting wet. Japanese service pays close attention to the fine details and little nuances.

The art of packaging is very developed in Japan. Almost always cashier ask whether you buy something for yourself or as a gift. If it is a gift, you will be offered several options for wrapping paper and ribbons. Packing is made for free without any additional charge. If a gift is a little bit cumbersome you will be given a numbered ticket and asked to wait for a few minutes. Cashier asks an assistant to wrap a purchase in order to prevent queuing.



5. I do not know whether this can be attributed to a specific Japanese service, but in my opinion it is very convenient when in restaurants a bill and the last order are brought together. First, you can check total amount and the contents immediately. Second, you do not have to wait until a waiter brings bill, then wait to pay, then wait for a change. This style of billing saves time, which is especially valuable in our busy life.

6. My favorite one. In each cafe or restaurant you will be given *o-shibori* (wet towel), or at least wet tissue. According to the Japanese style, the temperature of *o-shibori* depends on a season: it is hot in the cold season and cold in the hot season. Wet tissues remain same notwithstanding the season. I always recall with nostalgia the *o-shibori* service when I am out of Japan.



7. One more observation. When you buy food and household chemicals together in a supermarket, cashier packs the household chemicals separately to prevent unwanted contact with the food. He/she also asks whether you need chopsticks or spoons, when you buy something that is supposed to be eaten outside (like yogurt or box lunch *o-bento*). Sometimes they even do not ask and just put them as well as tissues in the bag.

Poly bags in the stores are free of charge. And depending on the amount and size of the purchase you will be given a few poly bags, as shop staff worry how conveniently you carry it home. Eco movement came also to Japan and after a few TV campaigns for so-called «my bag» (a small-sized extension bag), “my bag” or eco-bag has become popular these days. Therefore, cashier first asks whether or not you need a poly bag. As a reward for contribution to environmental protection you will be given a discount of 2 yen (it's sort of a trifle but nice).

8. Fast delivery service.

This delivery is useful by itself. A sender can select the date and the time period in which he/she would like the package to be delivered. Should the receiver not be at home, upon request from the receiver, the package can be re-delivered and no extra charge is necessary. If a package is delivered in your absence, an instruction manual with explanation of available time-zone delivery service so that you can specify delivery time is put in your mailbox. The system is totally automatic. The order is typed and confirmed by pressing numbers on your phone. There is no need to wait for an operator and a line is always free.

9. Toilets are free everywhere. I believe no comment is needed.

Here is an example. In Japan, the toilets are usually located inside the railway stations and can be reached only by passing through a turnstile by purchasing a ticket first. But if you tell to a station worker, that you only want to use the toilet, then you will be let inside without a ticket. I do not know if it is possible in other countries, but here everybody understands your situation.

10. When you buy a cake, the staff politely asks how much time you need to get home. First time I was confused because of this strange question. Later, I understood why I was asked about it. If a way home takes longer than the time during which a cake can be kept without a fridge, the staff puts a dry ice in a box.

There are still many and many examples that can't be recalled in one minute.

As you may know there is no tipping in any situation in Japan. Yes, friendly customer service workers greet you with a deep bow, a smile and after all they say "Thank you for your purchase" or "We appreciate your business. Come to back soon". Because the Japanese -style service considers, that the staff should be grateful to the costumers for using their services and not vice versa.

With best regards,



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