

## 《日本力推每周四天工作制,以应对劳动力短缺挑战》

Japan is a nation so hardworking that the Japanese language has a term for working oneself to death.

日本以其勤劳著称，这种文化深深植根于其社会与经济生活中。在日本，过度工作甚至有了一个专门的词汇——“过劳死”，反映出该国对工作的高度重视。



Now, the government is trying to deal with a labor shortage.

现在，政府正在努力解决劳动力短缺问题。

One solution is to get more people and companies to accept four-day workweeks.

一个解决方案是让更多的人和公司接受四天工作制。

The Japanese government first supported a shorter working week in 2021.

日本政府于2021年首次支持缩短工作周。

Few companies have signed on, however.

然而，很少有公司签约。

The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare said only about eight percent of companies permit three days off a week,

厚生劳动省表示，只有约8%的公司允许每周休息三天，

while seven percent give their workers the required one day off.

而7%的公司给员工规定的休息一天。

Hoping to get small and medium-sized businesses to change, the government started a "work style reform" campaign.

为了让中小企业有所改变，政府启动了一场“作风改革”运动。

It pushes shorter hours and other flexible plans for work along with paid time off and limits on overtime.

它推动缩短工作时间和其他灵活的工作计划，以及带薪休假和限制加班。

The labor ministry recently started offering free services and resources to help companies make the change.

劳动部最近开始提供免费服务和资源来帮助企业做出改变。

A ministry website explains the "hatarakikata kaikaku" campaign, which means "innovating how we work."

一个部门网站解释了“hatarakikata kaikaku”活动，意思是“创新我们的工作方式”。

It says that when workers can choose how they work, they will have a better outlook on the future and the economy will grow.

它说，当工人可以选择工作方式时，他们将对未来有更好的展望，经济也将增长。

The department handling the new support services for businesses says only about three companies have asked for their advice.

负责为企业提供新支持服务的部门表示，只有大约三家公司征求了他们的建议。

Such changes will not come easily in the Japanese culture, where being a "workaholic," or frequently working overtime, has long been highly valued.

在日本文化中，这样的变化不会轻易发生，长期以来，“工作狂”或经常加班一直受到高度重视。

That is credited for the country's national recovery and fast economic growth after World War II.

这被认为是该国在二战后国家复苏和经济快速增长的原因。

There is great pressure to be the same as the others in one's work group.

与工作组中的其他人保持相同的压力很大。

People usually take vacations at the same time of year as their co-workers.

人们通常和同事在一年中的同一时间度假。

Although the law and labor agreements limit overtime, some work longer hours without pay.

尽管法律和劳动协议限制加班，但有些人在没有工资的情况下工作时间更长。

A recent government report dealt with "karoshi."

最近的一份政府报告涉及“过劳死”。

That is the Japanese term meaning "death from overwork."

这是日语术语的意思，意思是“过度劳累而死亡”。

The report said Japan has at least 54 such deaths a year, including from heart attacks.

报告称，日本每年至少有54人死亡，其中包括心脏病发作。

Tim Craig wrote a book called Cool Japan: Case Studies from Japan's Cultural and Creative Industries.

蒂姆·克雷格写了一本书，名为《酷日本：日本文化和创意产业的案例研究》。

"Work is a big deal here.

“工作在这里是一件大事。

It's not just a way to make money, although it is that, too," said Craig.

这不仅仅是一种赚钱的方式，尽管它也是如此，”克雷格说。

Some officials think it is time to change that way of thinking to save the workforce.

一些官员认为是时候改变这种思维方式来拯救劳动力了。

Japan's birth rate continues to fall, and the work culture is said to be one reason for that.

日本的出生率持续下降，据说工作文化是原因之一。

Government reports expect that, at the current rate, the working age population will drop by 40 percent to 45 million by 2065.

政府报告预计，按照目前的速度，到2065年工作年龄人口将下降40%，达到4500万。

Supporters of the three-days-off model say it helps people remain in the workforce longer.

三天休息模式的支持者表示，它有助于人们在劳动力市场停留更长时间。

It would give them more time to raise children and care for older relatives.

这将让他们有更多的时间抚养孩子和照顾年长的亲戚。

For retirees living on retirement pensions, it would provide additional income.

对于靠退休养老金生活的退休人员来说，这将提供额外的收入。

Akiko Yokohama works at Spelldata, a technology company that lets employees work a four-day work week.

横滨秋子在Spelldata工作，这是一家允许员工每周工作四天的技术公司。

She takes Wednesdays off along with Saturdays and Sundays.

她每周三、周六和周日休息。

The extra day off allows her to get her hair done, go to other appointments or go shopping.

额外的一天假期让她可以做头发、去其他约会或去购物。

Her husband works in real estate.

她的丈夫从事房地产工作。

He also gets Wednesdays off but works weekends, which is common in his industry.

他周三也休息，但周末工作，这在他的行业中很常见。

Yokohama said that it lets her and her husband go on midweek family outings with their elementary-school age child.

横滨说，这让她和丈夫可以在周中带着他们小学年龄的孩子一起出去郊游。

But there are signs of change.

但也有变化的迹象。

A few companies, including Uniqlo, Ricoh and Hitachi have begun offering a four-day workweek.

包括优衣库、理光和日立在内的几家公司已经开始实行每周四天的工作制。

A recent Gallup public opinion study measured employee engagement.

盖洛普最近的一项民意研究衡量了员工的敬业度。

Gallup said Japan has among the least engaged workers of all nationalities it has studied.

盖洛普表示，在其研究的所有国籍中，日本工人是最不敬业的工人之一。

Only six percent of the Japanese who answered described themselves as engaged at work compared to the worldwide average of 23 percent.

在回答问题的日本人中，只有6%的人表示自己专注于工作，而全球平均水平为23%。

That means relatively few Japanese workers felt happy and highly involved in their workplace.

这意味着相对较少的日本工人感到快乐并高度参与工作。

Most were putting in their hours without investing passion or energy.

大多数人投入时间却没有投入热情或精力。

Kanako Ogino is president of Tokyo-based NS Group.

小野香子是总部位于东京的NS Group的总裁。

She thinks offering flexible hours is needed for filling jobs in the service industry, where women are most of the work force.

她认为，为填补服务业的工作岗位，需要提供灵活的工作时间，而女性占劳动力的大部分。

The company offers 30 different scheduling patterns, including a four-day workweek, but also taking long periods off in between work.

该公司提供30种不同的日程安排模式，包括每周工作四天，但也会在工作间隙长时间休假。

To ensure none of the NS Group's workers feel out of place for choosing a different schedule,

为了确保NS集团的员工不会因选择不同的时间表而感到不合适，

Ogino asks each of her 4,000 employees twice a year how they want to work.

小野每年两次询问她的4000名员工中的每个人想要如何工作。

Voicing your own needs is disapproved in Japan, where you are expected to sacrifice for the common good.

在日本，表达自己的需求是不被允许的，因为在日本，你应该为共同利益做出牺牲。

"The view in Japan was: You are cool the more hours you work, putting in free overtime," Ogino said with a laugh.

“日本的观点是：工作时间越多，你就越酷，免费加班。”小野笑着说。

"But there is no dream in such a life."

“但这样的生活没有梦想。”

I'm Jill Robbins.

我是吉尔·罗宾斯。

And I'm Mario Ritter, Jr.

我是小马里奥·里特。

## 重点词汇

hardworking 努力的；勤奋的

a term 术语；学期

deal with 处理，应付；涉及；讨论；与...打交道；论述；克制；与...做买卖；和...有生意往来；冷静面对

labor shortage 劳动力短缺；用工荒；劳工短缺；劳动力不足

get more 更多；获得更多；获取更多

working week 工作周；一周的工作时间

Ministry of Health 卫生部；国家卫生部；健康部；省卫生厅

a week 一周；一星期

one day 一天；一日

