

ALTIA CENTRAL RECRUITING

Recruit Newsletter No. 6 March, 2017

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The Final Push! Figuring Out Where Everyone Goes

By **Graham Van Zwoll, Recruitment Division Manager**

We're almost there. The proverbial light at the end of the tunnel is visible and another long but productive recruiting season is nearly complete. We continue to interview in March, sometimes right up to the day before our upcoming Orientation/Training session here in Nagoya, so it's definitely not too late to apply if you are still interested. If you are overseas though, the window for interviewing for April has since closed and you'll have to wait a few months to apply for our next recruiting season.

We've met literally hundreds and hundreds of people in the past 6 months, from Tokyo to Florida, from Hiroshima to Seattle, and a dozen places in between. Our focus is always on quality of

applicants of course, not just quantity, but in order to find the right people for each of our openings we need to meet as many qualified people as humanly possible. As you know, all of our applicants must be met in person and we do not allow Skype or phone interviews, so arranging to meet so many individual people for our face-to-face 90-minute interview with our limited recruiting staff is always a big challenge.

Long story short, we're almost there. We know which of our ALTs are moving on this year, for the most part we know which contracts we have won as well, and we are now trying to fit those applicants that we have already approved into as many openings as possible.

With big contracts in busy urban areas, small contracts in beautiful rural areas, positions in quiet prefectures from Hiroshima to Shizuoka, others in busy areas such as Aichi and Osaka, driving and non-driving positions, openings in junior high and elementary or a combination of both, areas where we have 10 good applicants for 1 opening or just 2 good applicants for 3 or more openings - it's varied, ever-changing and rather complicated to be honest. We'll get there though, and find the best possible ALT for each of our openings, so let's keep in touch and find that perfect position just for you.

What to bring?

For living and for school

By Charlene Yasuda, Former ALTIA CENTRAL ALT Administrator

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Where to start? For those of you who have never been to Japan before, you will be pleased to know that most of things that we need day to day to get by are generally available. Not everything perhaps, but most things, and sometime you'll just need to look around.

The biggest difference perhaps is the lack of variety in the supermarkets for some common things we might want to buy. Meaning you can buy corn flakes but only a few variations, unlike home where there is a whole gigantic aisle of dozens of kinds of cereals. The bigger cities, or even towns with a large number of foreign residents, do tend to have supplies of more imported or Western products, and you can find little oases of foreign foods in random places as well. You can stock up on these when you visit the big cities, visit a Costco when you get a chance, or order them from various websites online, but I think you will find that there are relatively few things these days that you will want for.

I thought it would be helpful to put a list of suggestions together of what might be useful to bring with you. If you have any other concerns about whether or not to bring a particular item, feel free to ask.

For School

- A **map** of your home country/the world
- Postcards** galore of your country/home area (you can enlarge and color copy these for school at any convenience store here in Japan)
- A **picture book** of home (pictures, not text)
- Money** a few examples of your home currency (a little variety of both coins and paper money)
- Photos** of your house, family, hometown and of you doing everyday things and things you are interested in (sports/ hobbies, travel, family etc)
- Pictures** or realia of anything that uniquely represents your country's culture
- A few boxes of **candies** or **cookies** to share with your school teachers (i.e. don't buy expensive *omiyage* just for your school Principal, it's better to buy a few packs of snacks to share with everyone - sorry, no snacks for the kids!)
- Your **laptop computer**, **camera** and **adapter plugs** for your appliances
- A pair of basic new or very clean **sneakers** or **slippers** to use as your indoor shoes for school (note that big sizes, meaning anything over 28 cm, are difficult to find)

For Home

-**Medications**, with prescriptions, please check to see if your prescription medication is legal in Japan. Also

keep in mind that some simple over-the-counter medication may *not* be legal here. Again, please check, as you might be surprised. Also for women, at least a months supply of feminine products.

-**Antiperspirant/deodorant**, typically difficult to find stick type deodorant or anything strong

-**Yen!** We strongly suggest changing some currency in your home country or at the airport on arrival. Japan is still a country where cash is the main form of payment for shopping/restaurants. Traveler's checks are *not* acceptable in most retail shops or restaurants. Personal checks are almost unheard of in Japan. Credit cards are accepted in larger establishments, however keep in mind that depending on the bank (Japan side) and your credit card company, there may be higher transactions fees due to the exchange of currency. Having about ¥50,000 JPY cash upon arriving in Japan should get you by until you can access an ATM or change your currency at a bank. -A **credit card with a CIRRUS or PLUS** symbol *and* a **PIN number**, as these can be used for an emergency cash withdrawal at any Post Office ATM in Japan (in English!), but only if you have a PIN number. Please make sure with your credit card company or bank about the limitation of cash withdrawal etc. in a foreign country. Many ATM cards or credit cards have cash withdrawal limits due to security.

-**Clothing**, because if, like most of us in head office, you are not a Japanese-sized person, then a good supply of clothes in your size is necessary. Larger sizes, especially for women, can be difficult (especially shoes and pantyhose)! Light clothing for most of the year, warm clothing for late fall and winter, and a good supply of undershirts and underwear for the HOT & HUMID summer (Japanese classes are not air conditioned and for that matter not heated in winter either and temperatures may range from 0 degrees Celsius to 40 through the year!)

-**Formal attire/suit and tie** for BOE and school introductions, first day of school and formal school ceremonies etc. This is not negotiable. This is Japan and this is how they do it here so please be sure to bring a dress suit, shirt, tie, belt and shoes.

-**Smart Casual** clothes for school, the dress code for school is smart casual (i.e. collared shirt/ polo shirt or blouse, trousers/slacks or skirt etc. - no jeans/t-shirts)

-Some things to help make you feel *at home* in your new apartment (photos of friends/family, books, knick-knacks for the apartment etc.)

-And perhaps a **Japan travel guide** and **phrase book**, obviously depending on your Japanese level of course.

ALTIA CENTRAL Training

The Professional Tools of the Trade

By Michael SULLIVAN, ALTIA CENTRAL Training Team

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Becoming an ALTIA CENTRAL ALT hinges on three critical components: a desire to explore foreign cultures (especially Japan of course), a passion for communicating with and positively influencing school-aged kids, and the ability to lead, co-participate, or follow an English lesson with equal facility. Perhaps one of the coolest things about ALTIA CENTRAL is that we actually care about your ability to do these things well and that's where training comes in.

Imagine for a moment your first day at school and some of the questions you might have: "Where do I go when I arrive to my new school?" "Who are the people I'll meet?" "Is it true that I'll have to introduce myself in Japanese to all the teachers in the teacher's room?" "Are they really going to call an all-school assembly in the auditorium on my behalf?" "How many lessons will I have and how will I get this information, plan and prepare for them?" "Will I be teaching on my first day?" "Good grief! What will be expected of me?" On your own, getting these questions answered can take weeks or even months of settling in before you begin to feel comfortable. Uncertainty, stress, concern, a general feeling of uneasiness weigh heavily on many new ALTs starting this line of work. Now, consider the average ALT works at up to five schools and some do considerably more! Let's do some simple math. That crap feeling times "considerably more" equals ... a rough few weeks or even months! Not when you work with us.

ALTs also face uncertainty of course - they are new schools after all, and there is a healthy amount of stress too, but just enough to heighten your sense of challenge and realize your preparedness from the training you have just completed. Our ALTs ask questions founded in greater confidence such as, "What tools from my toolbox will I use to make a positive impact on my school today?" Being well-supported makes our ALTs proactive and enthusiastic for these first days, and the settling in period can be measured in hours. We LOVE what we do and want you to enjoy this work as well. You'll have to in order to meet the expectations we have for you, but not to worry! Our training and

professional development programs are all about seeing you through to readiness and success.

Readiness is the mission of training and AC's can be divided up into three separate, but connected parts. First, we have Pre-Orientation Online training (Pre-OT) which can be done from anywhere on the globe. A few hours is all it takes and most new recruits do this in the week prior to actual training. Lots of useful information and guidance to accomplish two key goals are covered: your self-introduction in Japanese, and then your self-introduction lesson in English. It's also here where we introduce you to the Five Foundations. Next, a four-day intensive OT takes place in Nagoya near our main office. You'll be teaching from day one in front of your peers with your self-introduction as the teaching objective. Hiccups in the teaching process are expected with regard to delivery, and peer support is an integral part of improvement. We'll spend much of the time filling you with proven teaching methods and practices (and having a lot of fun, too!) so that on day four you may once again deliver your self-intro lesson after revising it with your rapidly growing tool box. Finally, about a month later we have you come back to Nagoya for one final day of Follow-up Training. We take the basic skills previously acquired (and hopefully have been practicing on the job!) and go to the next level. Always nice to see friends from OT again, too!

Lastly, with basic training completed, we look to extending your base of knowledge and skills another way. Once per year we do a Professional Development event that intentionally goes beyond ALT skills practice. PD events are focused on getting you thinking of your own next step whether that means another year as an ALT with ALTIA CENTRAL or some other fruitful endeavor. Themes in recent years have been, "Professional Development - Looking to Your Future!" and "Pathways to Success." Each company sponsored event features highly qualified, very experienced and more-than-capable speakers and you will not find another company offering this type of opportunity in Japan.

At ALTIA CENTRAL we hire great people and then we train them to do great things and have a positive influence in the schools we serve. We also know that great people are ever-changing and growing, so we strive to offer you encouragement through our training and professional development events to not stop at ALT work, but learn and grow from the process using everything learned for future endeavors.