In Japan, the freshman workers of a company join the company on the same day, usually April 1. So it is just like a high school class.

When you identify a person in the company, you often refer to Mr. Such and Such of the Class of '90.

It is said that each class has its particular characteristics every year. The Japan Productivity Center (JPC) has announced these characteristics, which mirror the society well. I graduated from college in March 1986 and joined a company the next month, so as a businessman I am in the class of 1986. According to the JPC, 1986 is the "Daily Lunch Special" type, which means the appearance may have enough variety to make you feel excited but the ingredients are basically the same and as a result it does not satisfy your expectations.

I would like to introduce the types of businessmen from the last three years, which will surely help you have a better understanding of Japan today.

- 2008—the “Curling” type. People orient the freshmen in a certain direction, push on their backs very gently and brush in front of their way, trying to create a pleasant working environment. When you stop brushing, they slow down or even stop. On the other hand, if you brush too much, they may go so far that they are good for nothing.
- 2009—the “Eco Bag” type. Eco bags can be folded small nicely but you have to unfold them large to use them, which means the young men are very handy to take around with you but it takes some time to operate with them well. Since they are made of thin materials, they are not appropriate for a long and heavy duty task but sometimes, unexpectedly and surprisingly, not as fragile as they look.
- 2010—the “Electronic Toll Collection (ETC)” type. In Japan the toll gates of highways have this system. Cars equipped with an ETC device do not have to stop and pay at the toll gates but just slow down and go through. Then the bars open and they will charge you later. The class of 2010 was called the ETC type. If you approach the young people too quickly, they are not quite ready to open their mental bar. They may be equipped with state-of-the-art technology but are sometimes not good at dealing with human beings. The better understanding you have about the users’ manuals, the more efficiently you can make use of them.