EXECUTIVE SEARCH · BILINGUAL RECRUITMENT · TOKYO

Japan Hire

The individuals capable of resolving your Japan challenge are never the ones submitting applications.

Reaching them takes Relationships paired with Business Experience to earn their engagement.

Japan Hire

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Our Candidates Feeback:
https://www.japanhire.tokyo/testimonial

Contact CEO Nicolas Tollie on Linkedin:
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THE GOVERNING THOUGHT

Japan's talent shortage is structural, so the talent you need is already employed — and reaching them is a relationship problem, not a search problem

2.5%

Unemployment — among the lowest in the OECD

–35

BoJ Tankan employment gauge — a three-decade extreme

11M

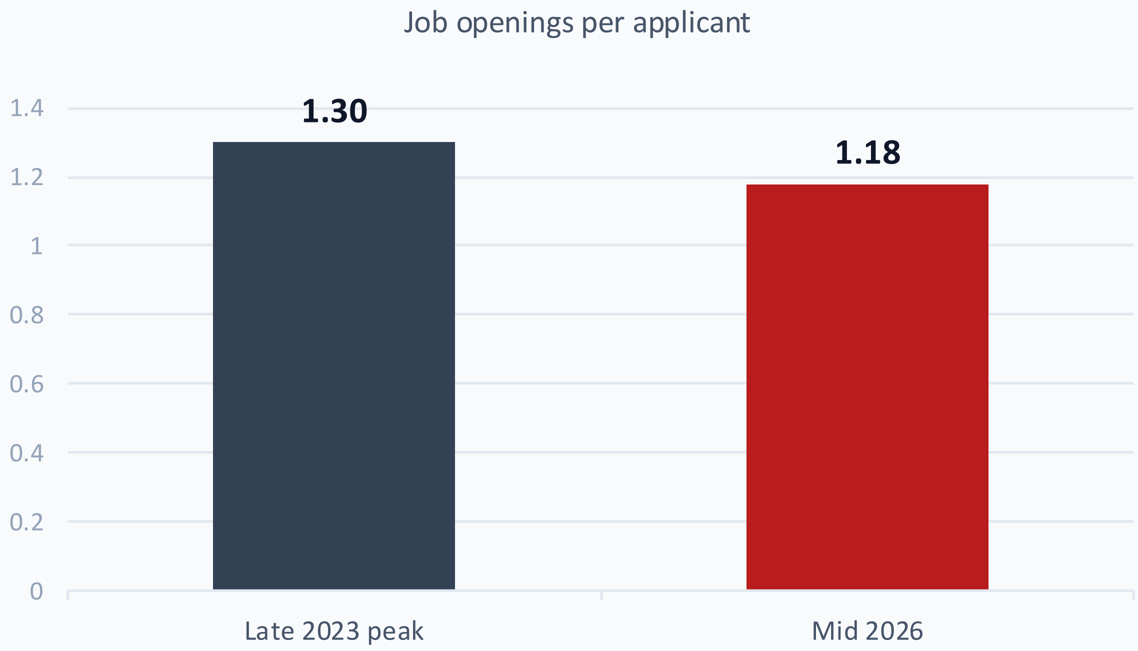
Projected worker shortfall by 2040

Source: MHLW; Bank of Japan Tankan; Recruit Works Institute — Japan Hire Labour Market Report, June 2026

SITUATION

The market looks like it's cooling, but the supply of people is shrinking underneath it

CYCLICAL — SOFTENING



Eased from a late-2023 peak above 1.30 to about 1.18 — still 118 openings for every 100 job seekers.

STRUCTURAL — TIGHTENING

−35

BoJ Tankan employment gauge
A three-decade extreme, signalling deep and widespread labour shortages

90%+

of firms report a skills shortage across the Japanese market

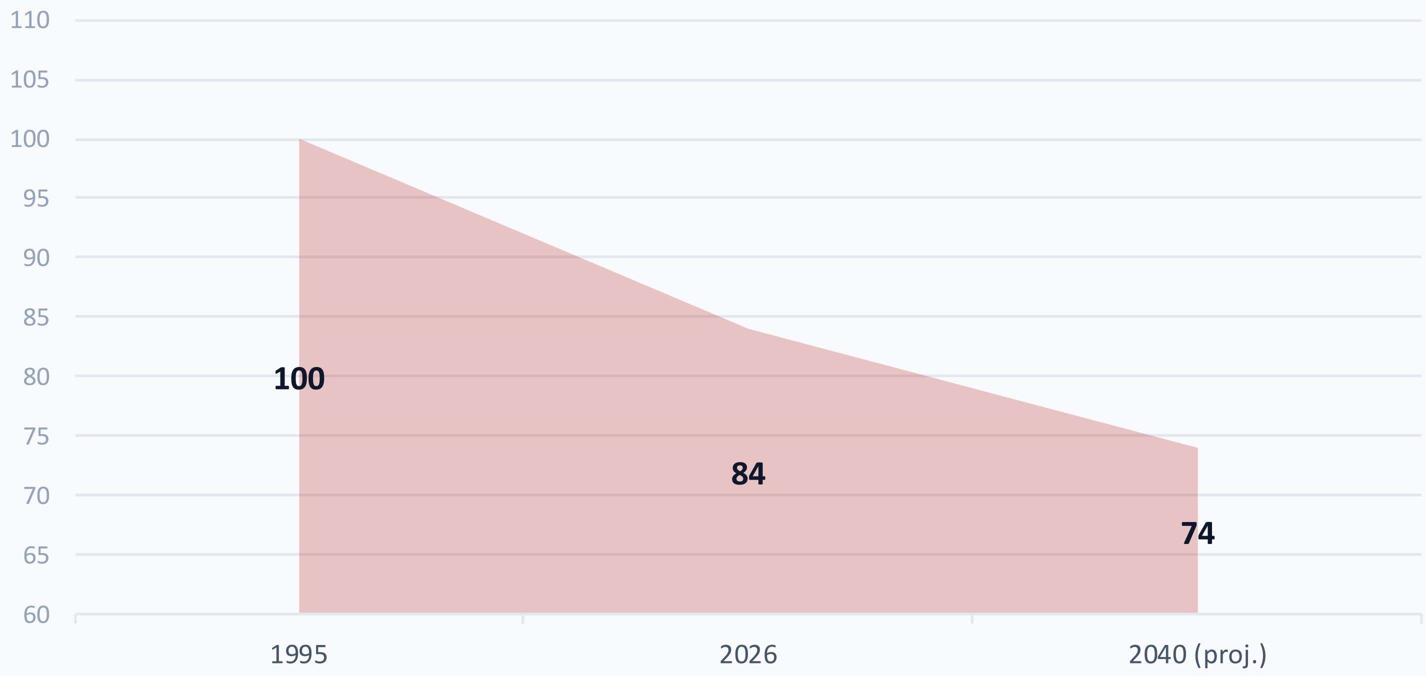
Demand for labour is softening at the margin while the supply of labour keeps shrinking. That tension defines hiring in Japan right now.

Source: MHLW; Bank of Japan Tankan survey — Japan Hire Labour Market Report, June 2026

COMPLICATION

Demographics — not the economy — set the floor, and the decline accelerates from 2027

Working-age population, indexed (1995 = 100)



−16% **already lost**

The working-age population has fallen roughly 16% from its 1995 peak.

−12% **still to come**

Labour supply is set to shrink a further ~12% by 2040 against steady demand.

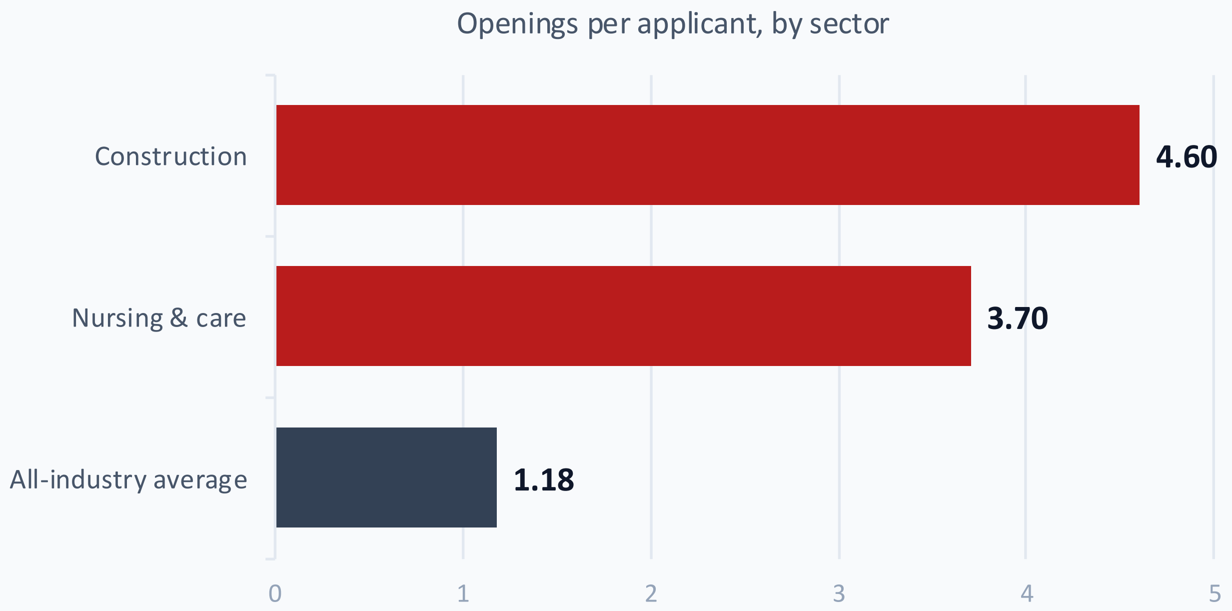
≈11M **worker gap by 2040**

The arithmetic of the two figures above — a shortfall no economic cycle can close.

It cannot be fixed by a stronger economy or a better quarter — it is baked into the population structure.

Source: Recruit Works Institute; MHLW. 2040 figure is a projection, not a forecast — index values derived from stated percentage declines.

Technology is the deepest gap of all — and it widens nearly eightfold by 2030



Construction runs 3.9× tighter than the market as a whole (4.60 ÷ 1.18 = 3.9)

THE TECHNOLOGY GAP

220,000 → 1.7M

IT professionals short today, widening toward 2030 — a gap of roughly 7.7× in four years.

Concentrated in: AI · cybersecurity · cloud · data

Employers report some of the toughest tech-hiring conditions in the world.

The shortage bites first in roles that must be done in person, and hardest in roles that cannot be trained quickly.

Source: MHLW; industry estimates — Japan Hire Labour Market Report, June 2026. Multiples calculated from the figures shown.

THE IMPLICATION

In a market this tight, the best candidate is never the best applicant

THE ACTIVE MARKET

Job boards · applicants · published roles · CV databases

Visible to every agency in Tokyo.
Anyone can reach it. Nobody pays for it.

~10%

WATERLINE

THE PASSIVE MARKET

Employed high performers · non-public roles (非公開求人) · direct relationships with decision-makers

This is where our clients' hires and our candidates' offers both come from.
It is not searchable. It is only reachable.

~90%

Illustrative split — directional, not measured.

WHO WE ARE

We assess talent through an operator's lens, because we ran the businesses we now hire for

1

Managing Partner

Consulting

2

Senior Vice President

Investment Banking

3

Country Manager ×2

International Subsidiaries

4

Head of Japan

Expert Network

Every search firm in Tokyo claims a network. Ask them who has run a P&L here.

20+ years living and working in Japan · bilingual team · boutique by design, with deliberately limited concurrent mandates

HOW WE WORK

Four steps, and the first one is a conversation with the decision-maker — not a job posting

1

Consultation & Strategy

We define the precise competencies, culture fit and compensation strategy the role actually requires.

2

Market Mapping

We map the Tokyo talent pool and identify the key players inside competitor firms.

3

Candidate Assessment

In-depth interviews on leadership style and track record — and we test business-level Japanese rather than accept "fluent" on a CV.

4

Placement & Onboarding

Offer negotiation, resignation support and transition follow-up, so the hire actually lands.

Step one is where most searches are won or lost — a job description written without the decision-maker in the room produces a shortlist nobody wanted.

You get the leader other firms can't reach — assessed by someone who has held the role

1

Access

50,000+ professionals in our Tokyo network, direct relationships at C-level, and confidential mandates that never reach a job board.

2

Judgement

We assess commercial acumen, operational vision and cross-cultural leadership — not keyword matches against a database.

3

Certainty

Executive salary benchmarking, discretion through sensitive replacements, and onboarding support until the hire is embedded.

ROLES WE PLACE

- Country Manager & Representative Director
- CEO · CFO · COO · CIO / CTO · CDO · CHRO
- Sales Directors & Vice Presidents
- HR Directors & Heads of Operations
- Strategy, M&A and Corporate Development
- Finance, Risk, Audit & Compliance leaders
- Digital, Data, AI and Cybersecurity leaders

Industries: consulting · financial services & insurance · technology & digital · life sciences · manufacturing · consumer goods · telecom & media

We represent you into roles that were never advertised — and sometimes into roles built around you

1

Hidden roles

Confidential, non-public openings (非公開求人) at top-tier global firms — never posted, and specifically seeking bilingual capability.

2

Real representation

CV review, interview coaching, direct advocacy with the hiring manager, offer negotiation, and follow-up after you have joined.

3

A long-term partner

Career counselling and market guidance between moves. We are building a relationship that outlasts this job search.

"WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON?"

A candidate told us, after the first meeting, that the role was not right for his next step.

Most agents would have closed the file there. We took his honest answer back to the client — and a better-fitting role was created and approved for him.

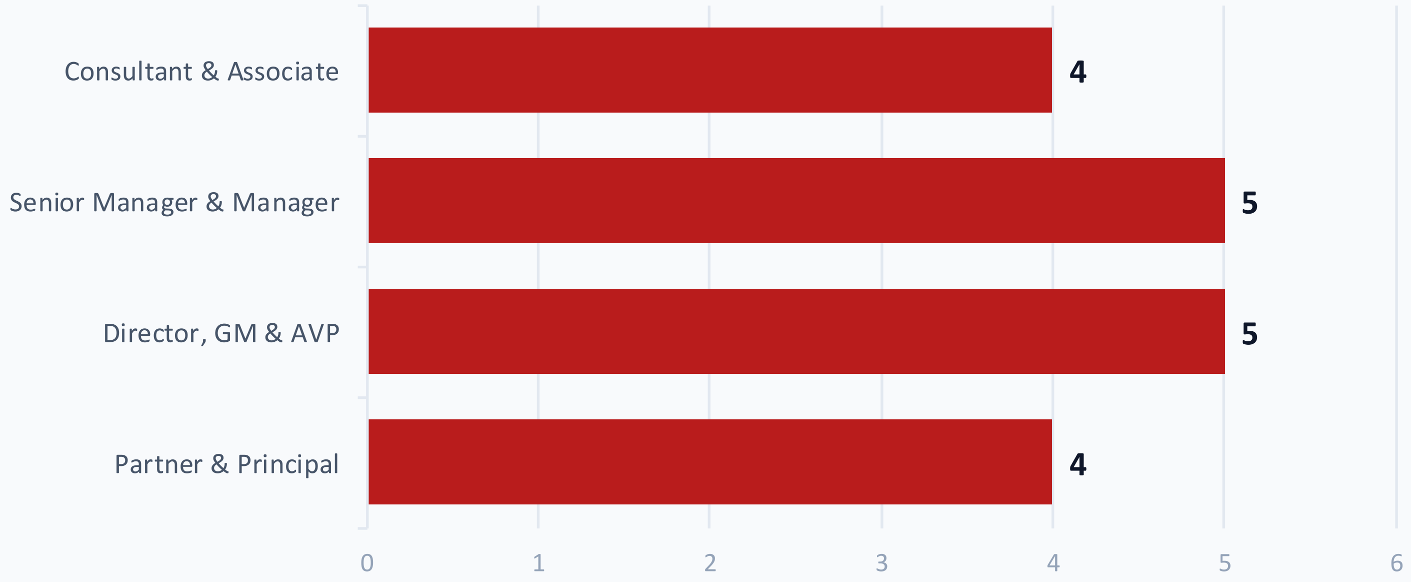
— General Manager, Global Insurer
AI & ML Ops

Confidentiality, objectivity and fiduciary duty are not slogans here — they are the reason both sides keep calling.

PROOF

Our proof concentrates where access is hardest to fake: MBB strategy consulting and global insurers

Written testimonials by seniority of the placed candidate



18 placements documented in the candidate's own written words

WHERE THEY SIT

9 strategy consulting, incl. global MBB
8 global insurance & life insurance
1 global audit & M&A advisory

MBB Partners do not write four-hundred-word recommendations for average recruiters. Depth of proof in two markets beats a breadth claim with none.

Source: testimonials published at japanhire.tokyo/testimonial, attributed by role and firm type only. Names withheld by design.

Candidates describe a thought partner, not a recruiter — and referrals are our main driver of business

“

He reached me when I wasn't looking

An unexpected approach led to a move he had not imagined making — after Nicolas understood what he actually needed, not what was on the CV.

Partner
Global MBB Strategy Consulting

“

A thought partner, not a run-of-the-mill agent

Deep insight into which sectors fit his background, conversations opened through his network, coaching through interviews, then a negotiated offer.

Principal
Global MBB Strategy Consulting

“

The role was never advertised — and it fit exactly

Relationships with the hiring manager and the COO surfaced a role that was not public, yet aligned precisely with her professional objectives.

Senior Manager
Global Life Insurer

Referral candidates are our main driver of business — a firm that runs on referral does not need volume.

Testimonials as published, paraphrased for length and attributed by role and firm type only.

THE ASK

Two conversations, one number — start before you have a job description, or before you have a job search

HIRING?

Send us the role — or just the problem.

We will map it against the passive market and come back with who is genuinely reachable, what they cost today, and how long it takes.

Bring: the mandate, the reporting line, the constraint you can't move.

MOVING?

Talk to us before a role exists.

Confidential, no CV required to start. We will tell you honestly where your profile sits in this market — including when the answer is "stay put for now."

Bring: what you want next, and what you are unwilling to trade for it.

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