

Diary of an International Business Management Student



Dean Spooner is a 3rd year student who is currently studying at Hosei University in Tokyo as part of his IBM degree.

“Prior to arriving in Japan, I had a very busy summer getting my flights booked, visa sorted, buying suitcases, clothes, toiletries, books and all sorts of items I thought I might need for my year abroad.

I think it would be fair to say that I wasn't really nervous at all before coming to Japan, I was just too excited! However, many of my friends were very nervous for several weeks prior to arriving in Japan. It's to be expected that students will feel a concoction of nerves and excitement at the same time – only natural!

I remember feeling very tired and grumpy for the first day or two after landing in Japan, but the buzz of being in one of the world's biggest, busiest and most atmospheric cities soon jolted me, and before long I was spending all day at the parks, palaces or walking by the never-ending stream of skyscrapers, taking photo after photo!

The food is incredible, the sights are amazing and I find myself being astounded by anything and everything – I could be in a 100-yen store (essentially Japan's answer to Poundland!), and I'll be excitedly trying to read flavours of crisps in Japanese! All of us who've started at Hosei Uni say we're currently riding a high, a 'honeymoon period' if you will.

I can't speak for other countries' residents, but I have found the Japanese to be incredibly welcoming. You find in their culture that they're a very welcoming, hospitable nation, and will do anything they can to assist you and make you feel comfortable.

But I absolutely must say now, any student coming to Japan must have some grasp of Japanese – do not expect to scrape by on English! I, along with many others, assumed before my arrival that English would be widely spoken and used in Tokyo, but this isn't the case. Outside of the train stations and airports, you'll find you have to rely on your knowledge of Japanese to get by, whether it's speaking to a passer-by in the street, or going shopping!