

Leading Japanese Company uses **TOEIC**® Test to Promote Globalization



"Going forward, I want to raise Pigeon's presence as a global company originating in Japan."

Shigeru Yamashita
President, Pigeon Corporation

Pigeon Corporation Success Story Snapshot

Pigeon Corporation is rapidly growing and wanted to expand its operations overseas. However, many of its employees were not aware of Pigeon's international success and did not see the need for developing English-language skills.

Pigeon's Human Resources department worked with the Institute for International Business Communication, Country Master Distributor for the TOEIC® tests in Japan, to begin using the TOEIC tests to measure English-language proficiency of its employees. Employees were then placed in company-sponsored English-language-training programs to strengthen their English skills.

Administering the TOEIC tests and implementing an English-language training program helped Pigeon Corporation raise awareness about the company's focus on globalization and reinforced its commitment to developing global human resources.

Company Snapshot: Pigeon Corporation

Pigeon Corporation is the top manufacturer of baby and childcare products in Japan. Since its founding in 1957, its overseas business has grown substantially, with 41% of sales generated abroad in 2012.

Quick Facts

- Key Categories: Baby/Child Care Products; Health/Nursing Care
- Corporate Headquarters: Tokyo, Japan
- Office Locations: Japan, China, Korea
- Number of Employees: 958
- Net Sales (2012): \$636 Million USD

TOEIC® Test Success Story

Pigeon Corporation

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THE CHALLENGE

Since its founding in 1957, Pigeon Corporation has been a prominent company in Japan. As the top manufacturer of baby and childcare products in Japan, they have become a leading brand through robust research, excellent product development and effective marketing.

Additionally, Pigeon's expansion over the past 56 years has led to substantial business in overseas markets, with 41% of sales generated abroad in 2012. Pigeon's international growth is due to an increased presence in other Asian countries such as China and Korea, as well as an ever-growing presence in the United States, where they currently hold a significant market share in various baby product categories.

Although Pigeon has long been a multinational corporation, many employees within the company were not aware of Pigeon's international success. As a result, individual employees didn't see developing English-language proficiency as a need. The Human Resources (HR) department at Pigeon, realizing how important its employees are to the company's continued growth, set out to correct this misperception.

THE SOLUTION

In order to make their employees aware that they are vital to Pigeon's continuing success, the HR department within Pigeon worked with IIBC, Country Master Distributor for TOEIC in Japan, to begin using the TOEIC® Listening and Reading and Speaking & Writing tests to measure their employees' current level of English proficiency. All regular employees were required to take the TOEIC Listening and Reading test, and depending on the outcome of the scores, employees were selected for their "Global Practical Ability Enhancement Training" program,

a 6-month program designed to improve employee proficiency in workplace English. As a result of using the TOEIC tests, the HR department was able to place employees in training based on their individual scores and was able to track their improvement over the course of the training. The TOEIC tests were also used to measure the outcome of this training.

THE RESULTS

For Pigeon Corporation, testing employees using the TOEIC tests and establishing an English training program was a big success. Their emphasis on strengthening English skills within the workforce raised awareness about the company's focus on globalization and commitment to developing global human resources.

Administering the TOEIC tests allowed Pigeon to measure its employees' English proficiency, promote employees self-development, and increase their personal English skills.

Employees placed in the Elementary training class (TOEIC score less than 500) improved their scores by an average of 83 points after training. Employees in the Intermediate training class (TOEIC scores between 500–699) improved their scores by an average of 47 points. Pigeon Corporation continues using the TOEIC tests to this day.

About the TOEIC Tests

For more than 30 years, the TOEIC tests have been the global standard for measuring workplace English-language communication skills. The TOEIC tests are used by nearly 14,000 businesses, organizations, and government agencies in 150 countries.

To learn more about the TOEIC tests and how they can benefit your organization, contact your local ETS Preferred Network office at www.ets.org/toEIC or email globalforum@ets.org.

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