

## Reading exercise for matching features.

In this passage you will see references to the 6 entities listed below.

(The passage is after the lists below. Study the names and then the statements).

**The passage mentions several people and entities:**

A: Nenosuke Yamamoto

B: Sato Holdings

C: The United States

D: Hiromi Yamamuro

E: The Japanese Government

F: Atsushi Seike

**For questions 1 to 6 match the entities and people with their descriptions (you can use some letters more than once)**

1. is trying to keep elderly employees
2. isn't worried about financial remuneration
3. must maintain the pay of elderly employees
4. is worried about future employment
5. is worried about future welfare
6. is involved with a multinational



### For Some Older Adults In Japan, A Chance To Stay In The Workforce

Hiromi Yamamuro is doing something that's relatively rare in Japan. At age 67, he's still working in the corporate world, where traditionally, the mandatory retirement age has been 60. But Yamamuro keeps going, because he loves his job — which he's been doing for 18 years — selling environmentally friendly products at Tokyo-based Sato Holdings. "We're developing new products every single day," he says. "Plus the purpose is to create an environmentally friendly world. And it's just so much fun!" Yamamuro says his wife would like him to stay home. And his friends, who are retired, just don't understand him. "They say I must be crazy," says Yamamuro. "They tell me I should do something that I like doing. But this is what I like doing."



The Japanese government would like to see more older workers like Yamamiro. Japan boasts the world's second highest life expectancy, 84 years. And with nearly 27 percent of Japanese citizens age 65 or older, the country's population is not only aging — it's also shrinking. According to the Japanese government, if nothing changes, a few decades from now, 40 percent of Japan's population will be over 65 and the workforce will be short some 8.5 million workers. So in 2013, the government passed a measure requiring companies to raise the mandatory retirement age to 65. But full compliance isn't required for another nine years, in 2025.

Sato Holdings is one of the very few companies that's open to retaining workers above the age of 65. "From a company point of view, it's very important to provide many options for working at the company," says Shigeki Egami, Sato's head of human resources. There are currently 15 employees over the age of 65 working at Sato. But that's out of about 1,800 total employees in Japan. One reason the number of older workers may be so low — at Sato and elsewhere — is that there's not much financial incentive to keep them going. In Japan, when employees approach the traditional retirement age of 60, their salaries are drastically reduced.

In the United States, this is called "lawsuit material." But in Japan, it's accepted practice. Those salary structures need to change, says professor Atsushi Seike, a labor economist and president of Keio University in Tokyo. If older people do not start working longer, says Seike, "both the social security systems and the Japanese economy as a whole will not be sustainable." It seems contrary to Japan's image as a nation of hardworking, industrious people that there are such significant obstacles for older adults who want to keep working. And they do want to: A government survey showed that 7 in 10 adults over age 60 want to work at least into their 70s, or as long as they're physically able.

That seems to be the plan of 80-year-old Nenosuke Yamamoto. He repairs and reconditions abandoned bicycles collected in his area of Tokyo. "I feel that if I keep on working, I might not age as much," says Yamamoto. "I might not have dementia or other sorts of aging issues." Yamamoto got his job through a public-private partnership called the Silver Center Workshops. The jobs are for people past mandatory retirement age, and they're usually part time and low-skilled: housecleaning, for example, or park maintenance. The wooden shed and concrete yard where Yamamoto transforms rusted wrecks into spiffy vehicles is hardly glamorous. But he doesn't consider repairing bicycles as a make-do job. It's his cause. "What I want to do is spread the idea that bicycles are fun," says Yamamoto, whose polo shirt is emblazoned with the Tour of Japan logo. "I've always been involved in bicycles work-wise, whether it's racing or repairing or sales. And I wish more people would understand how much fun it is." Silver Center jobs pay only about \$400 or \$500 a month. But Yamamoto says what's important to him isn't the money. It's the chance to keep pursuing his lifelong passion — regardless of age.

**Answers.**

1. B - But Yamamoto says what's important to him isn't the money.
2. A - Sato Holdings is one of the very few companies that's open to retaining workers above the age of 65.
3. C - In the United States, this is called "lawsuit material." But in Japan, it's accepted practice.
4. E - "Plus the purpose is to create an environmentally friendly world".
5. F - the workforce will be short some 8.5 million workers.
6. D - a labor economist and president of Keio University in Tokyo.