

K IS FOR TRUST: BRIDGING COMMUNICATION GAPS WITH KEIGO AND JAPANESE BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

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ABSTRACT

Many Malaysian professionals fluent in Japanese still face challenges when handling Japanese clients—especially in using Keigo (honorific language) and understanding Japanese business etiquette. Misuse of formal language and lack of cultural awareness often result in misunderstandings and loss of client trust. To address this, Cakap Jepun Academy launched a Keigo training class led by an instructor with extensive experience in Japanese customer service. The class features realistic business scenarios where Keigo is often misused, and guides learners to correct expressions, enhancing both accuracy and confidence. Participants praised the sensei's clear explanations, real-world insights, and practical examples that helped them apply Keigo effectively. Beyond language, we also conduct business ethics talks for Japanese speakers and Malaysian professionals in corporate industries. These sessions are led by trainers with deep experience in handling Japanese clients and working in Japanese environments. The sessions focus on practical workplace etiquette and client expectations. Participants found them helpful in resolving recurring communication issues through cultural understanding and adapting to Japanese professional norms. Together, these initiatives empower learners with both linguistic and cultural tools. Practicing the correct Keigo and applying proper etiquette not only improves service quality but also builds credibility and long-term trust with Japanese clients.

Keywords: Keigo, Trust, Business Ethics, Customer Service