

# 6

## In a Shop

In shops and businesses in some cultures, the customer is treated as “royalty”. In others, the relationship between staff and customers is more equal. Which do you prefer? Which feels more like “good service” to you?



VOCABULARY



AUDIO



FOR TEACHERS



### Part 1 You and Your Culture

#### WARM-UP SURVEY

Answer the following questions about your daily life.

#### WARM-UP SURVEY

**Q1** When you go to a store as a customer, how do you interact with the staff?

- |   | always                   | sometimes                | never                    |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • greet them (or respond to their greeting) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • thank them when you pay?                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • make eye contact                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • smile                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • say something when you leave the store    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Q2** As a customer in a store, what do you expect staff to do? → choose three

- use polite language
- bow
- smile
- make eye contact
- explain the product / item
- bag / wrap your item carefully
- see you to the door

**Q3** Do you enjoy having conversations with shop staff?

- Yes, I enjoy the human interaction.
- Yes, but not for too long and not too often.
- No, I like to keep conversation to a minimum.
- No, I choose shops where I don't have to talk.

**Q4** As a customer, which of these do you prefer?

- Being treated with deference, like “royalty.”
- Being treated in a friendly manner.

**Q5** As a customer, have you ever experienced any of these?

- You received the wrong item or order.
- Something you ordered was not delivered on time.
- Something you ordered was broken or defective.
- A phone operator didn't give you the information you wanted.
- A phone operator was rude to you.

**As a shop staff member, have you ever experienced either of these?**

- A customer was rude to you.
- A customer got angry at you.

#### VOCABULARY

1. to interact with ~
2. to greet ~
3. to respond to a greeting
4. to expect ~ to ~
5. to bow
6. to bag (wrap) an item
7. to see ~ to the door
8. human interaction
9. to keep ~ to a minimum
10. deference
11. defective
12. to be rude to ~
13. to get angry at ~

## INTERVIEW

1. First, write your answers to Questions 1~5 in full sentences, giving reasons and opinions where you can.

**Q1: When you go to a store as a customer, how do you interact with the staff?**

.....  
.....

**Q2: As a customer in a store, what do you expect staff to do?**

.....  
.....

**Q3: Do you enjoy having conversations with shop staff?**

.....  
.....

**Q4: In a shop, do you prefer to be treated with deference, or to be treated in a friendly manner?**

.....  
.....

**Q5: Have you ever had an unpleasant experience as a customer or shop staff member?**

.....  
.....

2. Ask the survey questions to three classmates and make notes of their answers.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
<b>Example</b> Name: <i>Tomoki</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• makes eye contact</li><li>• usually responds to greetings</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expects polite language, bows</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• yes, but not too long</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• prefers to be treated with deference</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• as customer: ordered item was broken</li><li>• as staff: rude customers</li></ul>
<b>Partner 1</b> Name:					
<b>Partner 2</b> Name:					
<b>Partner 3</b> Name:					

## EXPRESSION 1

Now let's think about Japanese society and some differences between various groups. Write sentences using words and phrases from these lists.

- cafes
- high-end brand stores
- hair salons
- bars
- convenience stores
- family-owned stores
- department stores
- chain restaurants
- street markets

1. I think that in Japan, customers tend to  in  more than they do in .

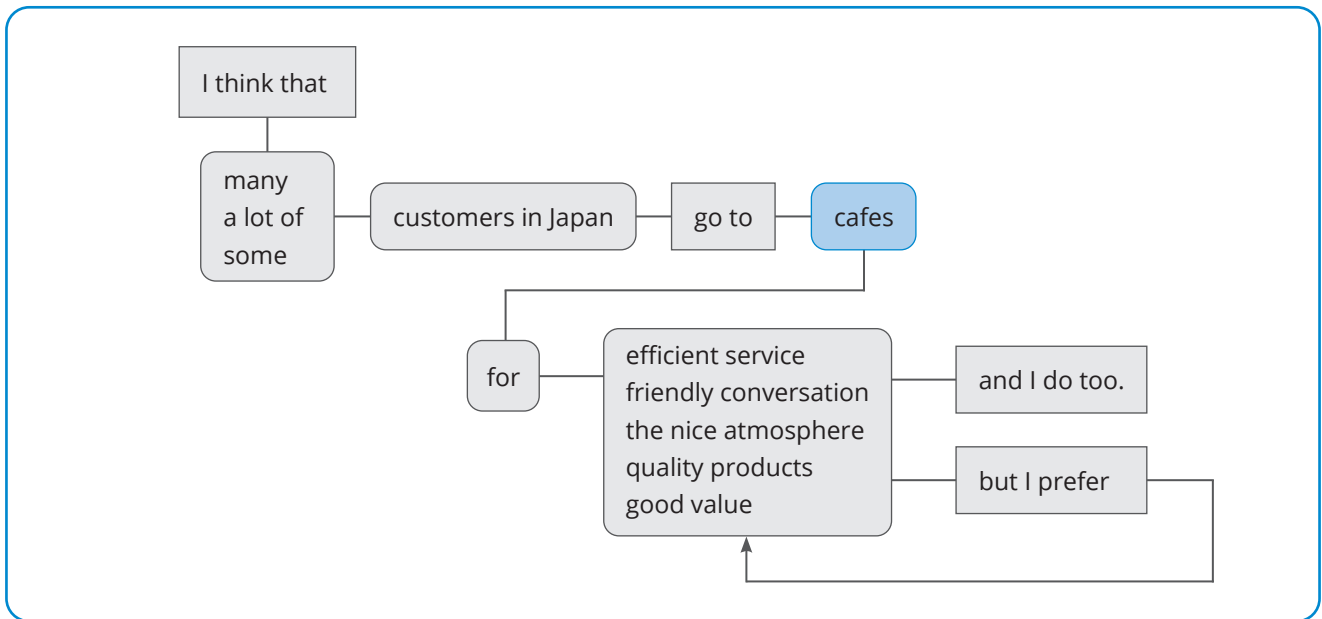
2. Staff in  are more likely to  than those in .

3. ....  
.....

- ask for a discount
- expect quality service
- chat
- stay a long time
- say hello (goodbye)
- say thank you
- talk about themselves
- make eye contact
- smile

## EXPRESSION 2

How about you? Are you like most others in Japan, or do you have different views? Write more sentences about Japanese society, adding your own opinions or habits.



.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

VOCABULARY	
1.	high-end brand stores
2.	hair salons
3.	family-owned stores
4.	a discount
5.	quality service
6.	efficient
7.	the atmosphere
8.	good value
9.	I prefer ...

# Part 2 People in Other Cultures

People from a range of cultural backgrounds responded to the Ibunka Survey on this topic. Here are a few of their responses for you to read and think about. You will find more in the One Step Further section.



**Q1** In the country where you grew up, how do shop staff and customers greet and interact with each other? What about in foreign countries where you have lived?



**Jim**  
Australian,  
web designer,  
lives in Japan

**1** In Australia it is very common for customers to reply to shop staff when they greet you. If you don't, you might come across as rude. I don't think this is the case in Japan. I don't see many people return greetings to staff here.

6-01

**2** When I was living in rural France, I soon learned to greet everyone, including other customers, when entering a shop. This is not what people did in the industrial town in the UK where I grew up.

6-02



**Kevin**  
British,  
teacher,  
has lived in France



**Sarah**  
Canadian,  
homemaker, has  
lived in Japan

**3** Sales staff in Canada often believe that greeting people in a friendly, more casual manner leads to a better customer relationship. So, many retail workers welcome customers with a friendly greeting and try to engage them in conversation.

6-03

## COMPREHENSION 1 Read the responses and mark the statements true or false.

	True	False
<b>1</b> Jim is a little shocked by the rudeness of some shop staff in Japan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2</b> Kevin found that shop greetings are more common in France than in his home country.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3</b> According to Sarah, it's common for sales staff in Canada to chat with their customers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

VOCABULARY
1. this is the case
2. to come across as ~
3. rural
4. industrial
5. retail workers
6. to engage ~ in conversation

## COMPREHENSION 2

Read the responses and fill in the gaps with the correct words.

Q3

How do you feel about customer service in your home country?  
How about in foreign countries where you have lived?



**Jerry**  
American,  
teacher,  
lives in Japan

4 The quality of the \_\_\_\_\_ in stores in the US is quite inconsistent. Sometimes you are well looked after, but other times you get the sense that the person working hates their job and is just malingering in. I never get that \_\_\_\_\_ in Japan, even in places such as fast food restaurants. The staff here are trained in providing service at a very high level. No matter the job, they have a very professional \_\_\_\_\_, and it's one of the things I love most about this country.

attitude  
service  
feeling

6-04



**Émilie**  
French,  
accountant,  
lives in Japan

5 Here in Japan the service is excellent but sometimes it feels a little impersonal. In France, staff and customers \_\_\_\_\_ each other, and sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ little jokes. I like that. But you can also have unpleasant surprises. Sales staff sometimes forget things. And they may even \_\_\_\_\_ to take responsibility for their mistakes.

greet  
refuse  
exchange

6-05



**Ravi**  
Indian,  
researcher,  
lives in Japan

6 In Japan, shop staff are very \_\_\_\_\_ and smiling but a bit "robot-like". The welcome is \_\_\_\_\_ and standardized wherever you are. The service is impeccable, \_\_\_\_\_ and fast, but also a little cold.

efficient  
uniform  
polite

6-06

## DISCUSSION

Which one of the survey responses on pages 41 and 42 was most interesting to you? Explain your choice, using the patterns below as a starting point. Then discuss it with classmates.

I found **A** Jim's response to be the most **B** surprising. In my experience, ... **C**

A	
1	Jim
2	Kevin
3	Sarah
4	Jerry

B	
1	surprising
2	fascinating
3	relatable
4	shocking

C	
1	In my experience, ...
2	In my culture, ...
3	From my point of view, ...
4	I'm most comfortable with ...

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

### VOCABULARY

- inconsistent
- to mail it in
- no matter the ~
- impersonal
- to take responsibility for ~
- standardized
- impeccable

## CULTURE SHOCK

Read the responses and mark the statements **true** or **false**.



**Gus**  
Irish,  
actor,  
lives in Spain

**7** I remember being quite surprised by a few things when I visited a souk market in Morocco. The stall-holders were quite aggressive, holding the arms of passers-by and guiding them into their shops. But once I was inside, I enjoyed the interaction with the stall-holder. He sat me down, poured me some tea, and we had a nice chat before he even started talking about products and prices. I guess in a culture where you haggle over prices, personal conversation is a good way to begin.

🔊 6-07

**8** I sometimes get reverse culture shock when I go back to France on holiday. I have gotten used to the politeness and thoughtfulness of the Japanese. Back in France, one day, while paying at the checkout of a supermarket, it seemed to me that the cashier had been rude. I told her, "You could speak politely." A customer standing in line behind me defended her by saying, "But she was polite." I was shocked!



**Catherine**  
French,  
accountant,  
lives in Japan

🔊 6-08

**True False**

- |  |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>7</b> Gus was most surprised at the price of tea in the market in Morocco.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>8</b> Catherine's idea of "polite service" changed while she was living in a foreign culture. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## CREATIVITY

Draw a simple manga based on the topic of this unit. It may be from your experience or your imagination.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

### VOCABULARY

1. stall-holders
2. aggressive
3. interaction
4. passers-by
5. to haggle over ~
6. reverse culture shock
7. thoughtfulness
8. checkout
9. cashier