

To Members of the Drucker Society of Japan

I understand that you are discussing chapters 3,4,5 of my book, *The Definitive Drucker*. I am honored.

The Japanese culture and communities were particularly close to Peter Drucker, and continue to be treasured in his legacy.

In one of my first interviews with Peter he said:

“One of my reasons for success in Japan is that I came to Japan not through Japanese business, but through Japanese art and Japanese history, which I had been interested in for 20 years before I visited Japan.... I went to a seminar in Osaka of 25 CEOs, from a Monday morning through Wednesday at noon. They asked, “What are you doing Wednesday afternoon in Kyoto?” I said, “I’m going to the National Museum to look at Japanese art,” and not one of them had ever been there. So I took them. And I could show them, and everybody in Japan immediately knew them. That gave me a very different standing,... Here was that *gaijin*, that foreigner, who knew more Japanese history and knew Japanese art, and loved and treasured it.”

Peter also said that he learned much from studying and watching Japanese companies. Part of this special connection may be due to your culture’s shared respect and caring for people and communities. The Japanese put the person, not money, in the center. That also was Peter’s approach.

Even after his death Peter’s words continue to challenge both companies and entrepreneurs to ask bold questions. He challenges them to do what is right, a challenge that is well understood and respected in Japan, particularly by each of you. The challenge of building an entrepreneurial culture in the 21st century Japan, and in many other countries, is not easy. The challenge of building a society of societies is not easy.

I was very encouraged by what I saw and heard at your meeting last year. My visits to Japan greatly enhanced my understanding of Peter Drucker in action. I was reminded of the relevance of his ideas to tomorrow.

I look forward to hearing about your members and their successes. In many ways his most important disciples are the rising generation of entrepreneurs – and that means you.

We welcome your anecdotes, and comments on Druckerinpractice.com.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Haas Edersheim