

§ 3 For the older generations who lament the younger generations, saying “ The youth of today... ”

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3-1 Lamenting the youth of today:  
an historical perspective

(<https://mayonez.jp/topic/1015332>)

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Recently, the author often experiences situations whereby senior generations are complaining about the characteristics of the youth of today. Also, most people may have been scalded by a senior citizen at some point for their youthful habits of today. Just as Isono Namihei, who is the stubborn father that appears in Sazae-san (available in Wikipedia), says, “Young people of today are unfit.” This seems to be an expression often used by middle-aged men. It seems that positive comments have been few and far between since this phrase was uttered. Tarnishing them all with one brush just because they are of similar ages is hard on the younger generation.

While young people may be offended by such criticism “unfit”, the lecturer believes that only a few people understand the true meaning of this word and why it is that the older generations say this. Firstly, the lecturer came across an interesting article in the above URL while he was researching the history behind “The youth of today...” The results are as follows:

## In Japan

### People who were born in the Heisei Era say:

“My workplace is a slave-driving company. Why do I have to work under these conditions in this day and age. People moan at me as I were a person who received education the easy way, I am really unhappy...” For the younger generation who were born in the Reiwa Era, for example, they seem to be moaning while making excuses.

### People who were born in the Showa Era say:

“When I was younger, my parent(s) did not provide me with an allowance. I moved all the way to Tokyo to attend University and held down a part-time job. I worked very hard without sleeping at night. I rather sent money back home to my parent(s). But I am happy. Young people of today have their parents provide them money, and for some this continues even after they have graduated from university. Why would they be unhappy?”, as they criticise their son or grandson s generation.

### People who were born in the Meiji Era say:

“When I was young, it was simply impossible to come up to Tokyo from countryside. What s more, during the Japanese-Sino and Japanese-Russo wars, I knew it was time for me to enrol when a red-coloured conscription notice arrived. But even under these circumstances, I was happy.” “People who were born in the Showa Era, at best, were evacuated, but they were never asked to fight for their country. They were free to move to the city, and leave their parents behind in the countryside. How can they be unhappy?”, as they criticise those who were born in the Showa Era.

## Yoshida Kenko (C. 700 years ago)

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Criticizes “bizarre (baby) names” in the following way (116th column in Essays in Idleness, also known as The Harvest of Leisure)

“It is really annoying to see a flood of these bizzare names. It s as if there is a competition to see who can choose the most bizzare name. It is unnecessary to use such unfamiliar and rare characters for naming people. These kinds of unusual and bizarre things always make for a cheap form of entertainment for the intellectual.”



Figure 8 Yoshida Kenko

## The Pillow Book written by Sei Shonagon (c. 1,000 years ago)

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“It is lamentable how the youth of today is corrupting our language. It is disgraceful how they feel the need to shorten anything and everything they say.” Criticizing young people s corruption of the language, especially the use of shortened words.



Figure 9 Sei Shonagon

All of the above can be found in recorded Japanese history. However, looking around the world, we find the following.

## In the world

### Philosopher Plato in ancient Greece (c. 2,500 years ago)

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Again, criticizing young people's behaviours, Plato points out their "lack of respect for older people, rebelliousness towards their parent(s), and gang-like violence with a disregard for the law. I fear that the world will become morally corrupt in the future." The same is probably being said even nowadays.



Figure 10 Plato

### People involved in the construction of the Pyramids in ancient Egypt (c. 5,000 years ago)

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People scrawled graffiti on the hidden part of the ceiling and other places not visible, written: "The youth of today...!" This seems to be the oldest record remaining today. As this era was when characters were invented, we can say that this phrase has been in use since the ancient times.



Figure 11 Pyramid

Further, people who were born in the Jomon Era would complain about those who were born in Yayoi Era: "We didn't know about rice cultivation when I was young, we went to the mountains and rivers to get our food. People starve to death when there are days without food. We lived each day like our lives depended on it. But I was happy." "The beginning of the Yayoi Era saw the advent of growing rice crops, and we stored our rice in raised floor warehouses. Why would we be unhappy?"

## ANSWER

The correct answer to Quiz 1 (2-3-2) regarding as to when such lamenting began: it has been a popular phrase since ancient times since humans developed the ability to express their emotions using language.

So, it is clear to see that this phrase “The youth of today...” is not only applicable to the present day. From the viewpoint of psychology, this can be summarized as follows:

This way of thinking is when a person is always ready to be boastful about how he/she has been living a positive life in such difficult times, as he/she struggled with the era, as if in exchange for youth. More recently, if you tend to be boastful and advise or even push your sense of values onto another, please be aware that this is regarded as a form of power harassment. Thus, if you happen to utter the phrase, “ **The youth of today...** ”, check that you are not being boastful about yourself at the same time.

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### 3-2 Reason for lamenting the youth of today

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As described above, the phrase “The youth of today...” seems to have continued to be uttered since the dawn of humanity, the lecturer would like to look closely at this phrase from the perspective of the social structure and environmental changes that have occurred in recent years. How has this changed in the modern era? The following drivers may have significantly influenced this.

- ✓ Changes in labour population and production capacity
- ✓ Entrance of women into the workforce
- ✓ Information environment brought about by the internet and smartphones

The younger generations have evolved in order to adapt to the new environment. Young people are especially able to use IT, SNS and PCs naturally without the need to refer to an operating manual. In addition, for the Showa generation, although it was quite common for wives to stay at home, it is rather common for both husband and wife to have a double income at present. This generation is now naturally accustomed to a diversity of working styles, including the sharing of housework and raising children.

"Men would be ashamed to be found in the kitchen." , is now an obsolete word.

Isn't the fact that people can walk without bumping into each other while using their smartphones a typical example of human evolution? While the lecturer does not always applaud such an activity in public places, he admits that the younger generations are well equipped with such advanced skills.

The ability to adapt to a new environment does not come about suddenly, but has developed over the centuries since the ancient times. If this is true, then, because certain skills are no longer used as a result of regression, it seems that the older generations who cannot catch up with those environmental changes tend to say " The youth of today...! "

The following are functions that everyone had in the Showa Era, are now no longer applicable as result of de-evolution:

- ✓ Glutton for punishment, to have guts, to have patience and be hungry with ambition (the world-view " Star of the Giants ")
- ✓ Independent thinkers with a sense of responsibility

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### 3 - 3 Characteristics of the youth of today

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(Masaaki Matoba, Human resources development of PHP Institute, Inc.)

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A more recent take on the characteristics of the youth of today has been summarized in Figure 12.

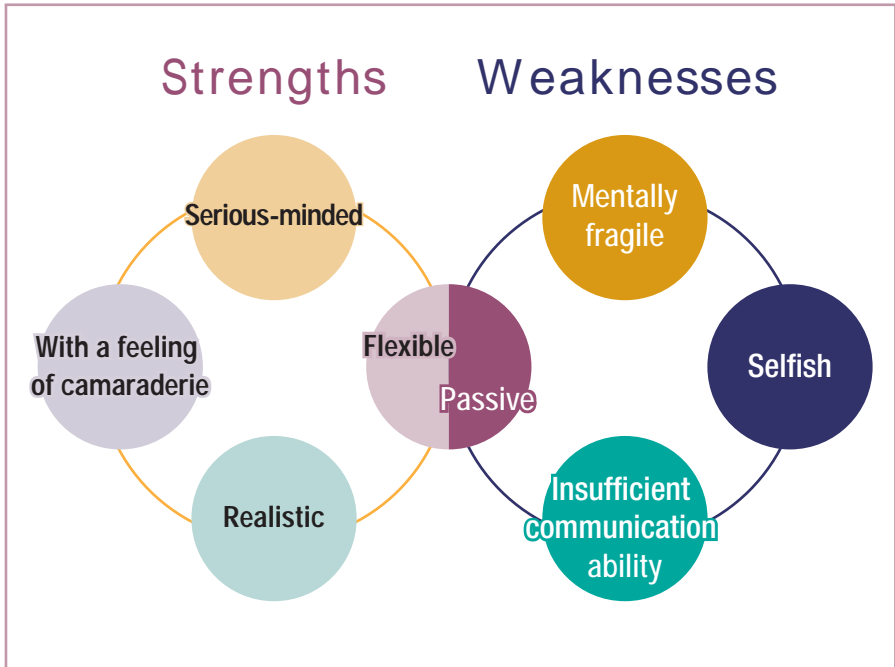


Figure 12 Characteristics of the youth of today

Their strong points are that they are serious-minded, flexible, realistic, and share a feeling of camaraderie. On the other hand, however, their weak points are that they are passive, selfish, and lack the ability to communicate sufficiently.

Considering the reasons as to why these changes are becoming more conspicuous, **the following large environmental changes** seem to play a significant role:

## Loss of real communication

### An increase in the number of nuclear families

This trend started during the middle of the Showa era when communication with grandfather and relatives and anything to do with the local neighbourhood started to deteriorate.

### Local communities

When the lecturer was sneakily taking and eating persimmons from his neighbour's garden in his childhood, the owner caught him red-handed and gave him what for. In the present day, if you did the same, you would be reported to police.

### SNS

Over the last ten years or so, it seems that virtual communication and conversations using text (on-line chat) have become the norm because of technology. When the lecturer was a child, there was a boss of the kids in the neighbourhood. And, we all played together, even though we were of different ages, while learning various things through the conversation we had when playing. To the contrary, nowadays, more and more children are playing by themselves on computer games - this has dramatically increased more recently. While we have seen a decrease in real conversation, SNS seems to have come to the fore.

## Loss of tolerance experience

The number of city dwellers has increased and, especially in urban areas, opportunities to enjoy experiences with nature have all but disappeared. Even in rural cities, many children seldom experience nature, because they are addicted to video games instead.

Moreover, in the Showa Era, "military-like strict sports clubs" were common. Putting aside as to whether these are good or bad phenomena, these trends are making headway, as can be seen in the changes in the hairstyle of high school baseball players



(previously, a shaved hairstyle was the norm) and their allegiance to fair play.

### Loss of chances to think

Before the popularization of the Internet, it was common to look something up using an encyclopaedia or by taking memos while referencing books in libraries. In modern times, the answer can be attained instantly using Google Sensei (teacher) or Professor Wikipedia using a PC or a smartphone. These days, it is rare to see students looking up words in an English-Japanese dictionary.

However, it is too easy to obtain information (answers) these days and people tend to have less opportunity to think by themselves with a tendency to believe information on the Internet without doubt. They seem satisfied that the information is correct without judging as to whether the information from Google or Wikipedia is actually reliable or not. On top of this, we have information that has been intentionally made up, for example, fake news.

These may have a profound impact on severe mental health problems. It is said to be mentally healthy, if one can find the answer to a question easily. However, in the raft of information on the Internet, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find the correct answer we are looking for, which can be very frustrating.

Worse still, we get suggestions via the Internet (SMS) on news, topics and products, which they believe we may make like. But, this only limits what we are allowed to be interested in. Is this backlash for the older generations lamenting “The youth of today!” However, there are older generations that are addicted to the Internet, also, who are in agreement with having such a limited choice.

## 3 - 4 Has the number of eccentric new employees been increasing?

Referred to as an age of mental health recently, one in five people are purportedly suffering from a mental disorder. “Psychiatric disorders” mainly consist of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Asperger's syndrome Attention-deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Learning and Disability (LD), whereas those that are mainly classified under Developmental Disability, Mood Disability and Schizophrenia or Integration Disorder Syndrome, are categorised as Mental disorders. In particular, over the last decade, a worker, who was once simply regarded as an “eccentric person” is now considered to be a person with a “developmental disability”.

People suffer from mental disorders when they are drastically affected by significant environmental changes which cause serious stress, even when the brain itself is not damaged. As per of April 1, 2018, companies including public institutions are obliged to employ persons with disabilities, including handicapped persons and it is especially necessary to properly understand Developmental Disability. (See Table 13)

[https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/seisakunitsuite/bunya/koyou\\_roudou/koyou/shougaisha/04.html](https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/seisakunitsuite/bunya/koyou_roudou/koyou/shougaisha/04.html)

To business owners

**From April 1, 2018, the mandatory employment rate for persons with disabilities is set to increase.**

In the realization of a “cohesive society” where people with disabilities can live freely as members of the local community, all business owners are obliged to hire people with disabilities at a rate exceeding the legal employment rate (Employment rate system for persons with disabilities). This mandatory employment rate will change from April 1, 2018 as follows.

Employers Division	Mandatory employment rate	
	Presently	After April 1, 2018
The private sector	2.0%	2.2%
Central government organization or a local government	2.3%	2.5%
Prefectural Boards of Education	2.2%	2.4%

Table 13 Employment Rate of Persons with Disabilities

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## 3 - 5 Developmental Disabilities

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Developmental Disability is defined as one of the Psychiatric Disorders, and is roughly divided into the following two disabilities.

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### Mental Disorder

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Mood Disability and Schizophrenia or Integration Disorder Syndrome are categorized under this and classified as Manic depression and depression. The illness is caused by not adapting to a new environment which is dramatically different. Treatment, medication and counselling are given by psychiatrists and psychotherapists.

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### Developmental Disability

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Another mental illness, “developmental disability” is caused by genetic factors, pregnancy, abnormalities in childbirth, trauma in early childhood due to physical punishment or experience of a death at a young age.

Although it should be emphasized that environmental changes may be causing people to suffer from development disabilities. Although it was believed that his/her manic depression had been cured by medication, there was a repeat recurrence somehow. The lecturer heard that the reason why he/she could not be cured completely was because the person had a developmental disability.

Regarding a development disability, as there was an abnormality during brain development, a part of the brain does not function as it should. For example, if you cannot throw a ball well, it may be caused by an abnormality in the musculoskeletal or muscle transmission system. However, developmental disability is because of an abnormality in the

thinking part of the brain or brain transmission system. Specifically, he or she cannot talk properly or is not sociable, as a result of an abnormal brain function. In the past, we only mentioned that they were eccentric. However, this is not because of their personality. Again, the current situation is that those people with developmental disorders entered into society without knowing themselves, and they realise their developmental disabilities once the pathological classification is revealed.

The term Developmental Disability has been recognized in society over the last 20 years, but we tend to think that it has been increasing when hearing the term. The lecturer sometimes hears that the number of employees who cannot talk to other people and who cause trouble with customers is increasing; it seems that it was not as noticeable until now. Namely, when we did not use SNS or e-mail like today, we had conversations with people with developmental disabilities. Thus, we might have just thought that “he or she has a strange character”. However, he or she may use email to request holiday leave from their supervisor, even if they are sitting beside one another. It has become common place nowadays that only the sound of people typing on a keyboard may be heard in an office.

Furthermore, despite the fact that he/she may have entered the company with outstanding results, it so happens to be that after while since starting the job, that developmental disorder symptoms start to manifest. It could be that the individual only realized this since becoming an adult (especially since starting to earn his/her own living).

## Has the number of the people with developmental disabilities been increasing?

As mentioned above, people with developmental disabilities is nothing new, but it seems that they were not visibly recognizable unlike nowadays. MEXT investigated “Students’ learning and behavioural difficulties” (provisional translation) in 2012.

(Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) Homepage )

[http://www.mext.go.jp/a\\_menu/shotou/tokubetu/material/\\_icsFiles/afieldfile/2012/12/10/1328729\\_01.pdf](http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/tokubetu/material/_icsFiles/afieldfile/2012/12/10/1328729_01.pdf)

According to the results, 6.5% (6.2% ~ 6.8%) of the school children have this tendency which is a significant number. This means that there are 2 to 3 children with a developmental disability in a class consisting of 40 children.

When I asked the lecturer’s first son, who is a teacher at an elementary school, about this, the proportion of those children who significantly show remarkable difficulties in learning and other behaviours may be agreeable with the figures above. However, when including other children who show similar tendencies, the teacher feels that double the number of children may be more true, which means that approximately 13% of all class members: at east 5 children in a class of 40.

Moreover, when mentioning this to a professor at a maritime university, the lecturer heard a surprising reality, that there are students with developmental disabilities or similar tendencies in the range of 26% (double) which appears to be 1 in every 4 students.

## Characteristics of People with a Developmental Disability

Regarding Developmental Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention-deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Learning and Disability (LD) are well-known. Among these, ASD was known as Asperger's syndrome until recently. Also, Attention-deficit Hyperactivity Disorder was referred to as ADHD.

It is said that people with developmental disabilities have a biased speciality area, for instance, strong in maths and science, or strong in a particular artistic capacity or language. As for the above mentioned maritime university students, it is natural that a large percentage may have a developmental disability because strength in maths and science are necessary skills for a mariner's training.

People with LD will experience difficulties working in a company with others, however, people seldom work together in the maritime industry. In this text, we will take a closer look at ASD and ADHD within the context of developmental disability. (Source: Materials on mental and developmental disabilities for work supporter training by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare) (provisional translation)

### Developmental Disability, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) (Asperger's syndrome)

The following four characteristics are significant.

#### Faces difficulties in social contexts

Tends to react in an extreme way to others. He/she exhibits either extreme or has almost no reaction to others' words and actions.

### Strong fixations

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The range of his/her activities and interests is extremely narrow. Also, it is difficult to understand what is going on. They have a tendency to focus on something very strongly.

### Communication disorder

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It is often observed that he/she cannot speak effectively or listen well, or they only talk about themselves and do not listen to others at all. In addition, they cannot read between the lines.

### Sensitive, dull and clumsy overall

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They are characterized as being sensitive or dull, and either overreact, or show no response at all. While clumsy on the one hand, some are capable of extremely fine work, at the other end of the spectrum. (i.e. fine line drawings)

## Characteristics of ADHD

ADHD manifests the following three characteristics.

### Inattention

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Makes careless mistakes, does not listen to others, cannot complete one task, cannot make a promise and often forgets; defects that the individual is to overcome as a member of society.

### Hyperactivity

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Cannot stay still, appears restless and fidgets nervously

### Impulsiveness

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He or she cannot wait his or her turn and will answer in the middle of

a question. Even when having a conversation at a coffee shop, they frequently tend to interrupt someone in the middle of talking. For those in particular who tend to have this tendency, even at parties, the lecturer hopes it may help one to try and suppress this tendency by remembering “ consciously that you have such impulses ” .

From the lecturer’s experience, there are other ways to identify if a person has a developmental disability (other than those already mentioned) below:

### He/she cannot eat everything in a balanced manner.

For example, on observing that person eating a set meal (teishoku), for example, a pork cutlet on top of a bed of cabbage, they may start eating only shredded cabbage. And then only the pork cutlet... After that, only the rice (perhaps with the odd pickle occasionally)...then, finally, drink the miso-soup down in one go.



Photograph 14  
Pork cutlet set meal

### Exhibits peculiar eating habits when eating Curry and rice

Starts eating either only the curry mixture or the rice. Or, he/she may start eating only after having mixed the curry mixture and rice together.



Photograph 15  
Curry and rice  
(Letutuceclub.net)

If any recruitment officers happen to be reading, try asking the candidate to eat a set meal or curry and rice at the time of the recruitment exam. (Note: this should not be intentionally referred to as part of the elimination process.)





To follow is another example of the lecturer's experience with a person with a developmental disability.

One day, an officer with prominent signs of a developmental disability made a mistake at work. Then, the lecturer, who was his superior (section chief) at that time, asked him to come and see him in a private room and gently warned him in a nonchalant way while trying to contain his anger, “I imagine that prioritizing tasks proved to be difficult for you this time. Let’s be careful next time.” However, the officer called the lecturer the following morning, saying “I cannot come in today, because your warning was too strict”, and did not come to the office for three days.

A Similar occurrence happened for this particular officer in a different department. That section chief officer remanded him in front of all the other members of staff. As a result, he took six months leave of absence, the lecturer heard.

When needing to talk with not only an officer with a developmental disability, but also a subordinate about inappropriate action etc., if possible, one should use a private room and talk to him/her on a one to one basis in a peaceful manner. This antiquated way of reprimanding someone in front of all the members of staff nowadays is referred to as a “public execution”, but, this must never be done. This is “doing more harm than good”.

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### 3 - 6 Developmental disabilities at sea

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On 1 January, 2012, the Ordinance for Enforcement of Mariners Act (provisional translation) was amended. Regarding the “Seafarers health survey (provisional translation) in January 2012”, some parts of their guidance issued by the Safety Management and Seafarers Labour Division in the Maritime Bureau of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism will be introduced here.

<http://www.mlit.go.jp/common/001011633.pdf>

- **Ordinance for Enforcement of the Mariners Act (provisional translation)**

Considering the degree of the disability, background and work assignment, those who are deemed to be unable to appropriately recognize, judge and communicate while working due to a visual impairment, language or mental **incapacity**.

- **Medical examination pass standard chart**

A suffering from hallucinations, delusions or **any other prominent mental symptoms**, if allowed to work yet who has been judged to **compromise the safety** of oneself and fellow workers, **will not pass**.

In the eyes of the law, anyone clearly suffering from a developmental disability will not be able to board a vessel. However, of the doctors issuing a seafarers health certificate, there are very few doctors that are trained in psychology. Thus, if a candidate exhibits only minor symptoms, it is likely that they will pass the examination and obtain a health certificate.

According to the below [STCW Guide for Seafarers A-1-9 Criteria for Physical Fitness], seafarer should:

2.3 Have no medical condition, disorder or impairment that **will prevent the effective and safe conduct of their routine and emergency duties on-board.**

2.4 Are not suffering from any medical condition likely to be aggravated by service at sea or **likely to render the seafarer unfit for such service** or to **endanger the health and safety of other persons** on-board.

2.5 Are not taking any medication that has side effects that will impair judgement, balance or any other requirements for effective and safe performance of routine and emergency duties on-board.

See below for [MLC1.2 Medical Certificate]

Basically, regarding an organization that has authority within member states, it is required to develop national regulations that secure the requirements of the Convention.

There is a system in place for educating seafarers that prevents those with developmental disabilities from becoming a seafarer. This is known as the Dormitory System.

Those readers that have experienced the Dormitory System may feel traumatised when seeing these words:

Senior	Junior	Sophomore	Freshman
God	King	Common people	Slave

A Dormitory System is a place where students in their Freshman year through to Seniors all live together in an unreasonable environment to learn about themselves, their strength and resilience naturally, and those students who find it intolerable naturally leave the dormitory and consequently the training ground.

The idea behind these dormitories was to prepare seafarers for ship operation in unreasonable conditions, and they were a suitable environments to achieve this, but these days there are no more compulsory Dormitory Systems, and if one does enter a dormitory, they would be in a single room.

Moreover, in April, 2018, following the fatal falling of a cadet on-board the sailing ship Nippon Maru, some in the maritime industry have voiced concerns that there should have been more practical training available and that climbing the mast was outdated and dangerous. Some are calling for a complete ban on the use of sailing ships for resilience training.

As a result, we have seen an increase in the number of qualified mariners who have not learned about resilience or a sense of coherence. A connection is yet to be made, but it is

worrying how there seems to have been a rise in the number of cases, starting with those wishing to quit only after having just started, to those that have suffered from neurosis and even suicide.

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### 3 - 7 Vocational Problems and Measures to be Taken when Faced with Developmental Disabilities

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As mentioned earlier, those with developmental disabilities exhibit the following characteristics. It is important to understand these if we are to go about finding a solution.

#### When he/she is unable to understand utterances only and abstract instructions

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Give concrete instructions (when by, what is to be done, what is to be used etc.) and instruct him/her to complete each task one at a time, occasionally asking them to create a detailed report.

#### When implicit rules and somewhat vague directions are not comprehended

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He/she will understand if the implied is clearly stated. This may involve rewriting the manual or book of procedures.

Through the author's years of teaching experience, he goes on to show how what may be understood by someone born in the Showa Era may not be interpreted in the same way by someone born in the Heisei Era.

On the day just before an internal audit it was necessary to have some important documents copied. The instruction was "These are very important documents for tomorrow's audit, please burn (make) copies of them". He actually burnt it in the incinerator.

Instead of using such an ambiguous term, what the lecturer now wishes he said was, "Please make X number of photocopies".

## When he/she is unable to undertake a number of different tasks at once

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This is related to the previous two points. Be sure to explain thoroughly and to provide work in manageable chunks. By understanding people with developmental disabilities and by allotting them prescribed and precise work, this may help prevent human errors.

Here we have learned about the younger generation of today and people with developmental disabilities. To sum up, the lecturer believes that the following measures should be taken.

It is important to understand the environment in which the learner was raised.

When the lecturer's eldest son visited the home of a child with developmental disabilities, it seems that the child's parents also exhibited such a tendency. We may infer that a "monster parent" may also have the same tendency.

To understand that the working place should be a place where employees with developmental disabilities are comfortable and that this should be the same for the rest of the employees as well.

People with developmental disabilities have the potential to become assets to the company if they find the right place. Also, this could lead to a review of procedures and regulations.

It is important to improve the work environment to utilize their precision and commitment and include this in the company's "mission". Some psychologists predict that "people with developmental disabilities will develop the 21st century".