

シンポジウム 1-3

企業が求める若手研究者と入社後の育成

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ヤクルト本社は創業以来、科学性に基づいた製品を扱っており、当社研究所にはベースである腸内細菌の研究を深めると共に、科学性に基づいた製品を引き続き世に送り出すことが求められている。企業が求める理想の若手研究者像は、企業の業種や理念等によって異なると思われるが、それぞれの研究所で培われてきた基礎研究・応用研究に関するノウハウや知識を引き継いで、更に発展させ、それらの成果を企業活動を通じて社会に還元していくことが望まれているのは、各社共通するところであろう。本シンポジウムでは、当社が求める若手研究者像と、我々がどのように入社後の若手研究者の育成に取り組んでいるかを紹介したい。

研究者の素養・能力：研究者が持つべき素養・能力として、創造性、専門分野の知識、課題設定能力、探究心、課題解決能力、基礎的な知識、粘り強さ、バランス感覚・俯瞰的能力、などが挙げられている*。研究職の採用にあたっては、研究分野がある程度のウエイトを占める書類選考の後、SPI検査と人事部および指導研究員（係長に相当）による一次面接、部次長による二次面接、役員による最終面接が順に行われる。1次面接以降は、研究者としての素質と同様に“人間力”が採用の基準になっている。この“人間力”の定義は一義的には困難であるが、この採用の場においては「一緒に仕事がしたいと思えるか」と言い換えることができるだろう。また、特に近年は、今後の国際化や研究分野の多様化に対応するために、語学力を含めたコミュニケーション能力が重要視される傾向がある。

研究者を対象とした企業教育：企業による研究者への教育は、新入社員教育と専門分野の深化・育成のための教育に分けることができる。当社の新入社員は、人事部による一般研修を受けた後に研究所に配属され、そこで全ての研究室を回りながらおよそ半年の研修を受ける。この研修によって、現在研究所で取り組んでいる課題の全体像を把握し、同時に全所員との相互理解を深めることとなる。また、この研修を通して新入社員の人柄や語学力、適応力を見極めて、海外での研究の機会を若い時から与えるようにしている。

一方、専門分野の教育は、研究室に配属された後、On-the-Job Trainingにより行われるが、それをサポートするための様々な試みも行っている。国内の大学・公的研究機関との共同研究の実施や寄付講座の開設、海外（ヨーロッパ）研究所への出向や海外の研究機関との共同研究の実施、研究員の交流、国際シンポジウムの開催などが例として挙げられる。

*我が国の研究活動の実態に関する調査（2004）科学技術政策研究所編「日本の科学技術の体系的分析」
p70

Fulfilled Junior Researcher as Company Employees and Their Training Program

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Since its founding, Yakult Honsha has been provided on an ongoing basis products characterized by their superior scientific validity. Therefore, the Yakult Central Institute for Microbiological Research has been charged with the mission of continuously bringing to the market products that have such scientific validity while further advancing its probiotics research, which constitutes the backbone of its endeavors. The ideal junior researcher for an enterprise differs from firm to firm in accordance with industry sector and corporate philosophy. Still, individual companies presumably share a wish to pass down to their junior researchers basic research/applied research-related knowhow and knowledge—nurtured over the years at their respective research institutes—and to have the junior researchers achieve further development, and to deliver the benefits of such knowhow and knowledge to society through the companies' business activities. This symposium is intended to outline what Yakult considers the ideal for junior researchers to be and to highlight how we are striving to develop our junior researchers after their joining us.

Researcher's qualities and capabilities: Researchers are required to have, among other skills, creativity, specialist knowledge, the ability to identify and solve problems, an inquiring mind, basic knowledge, tenacity, a sense of proportion, and the ability to see the big picture. The researcher hiring process starts with a written screening that is focused to a certain extent on the research area concerned, followed by an SPI examination as well as a first interview by Personnel Department and instruction researcher (equivalent in seniority to a sub-section chief). The rest of the hiring process consists of a second interview conducted by the deputy department head and the final interview by the directors. The hiring criteria, which are in place from the first interview stage onward, include researcher qualities as well as "human skills," a term that is not easily defined but can be identified in hiring to mean the "ability to make colleagues want to work with you." We note that, particularly in recent years, increasing importance has been attached to researchers' communication skills, including foreign language skills, as a means of addressing future progress in globalization and the diversification of research fields.

Corporate education for researchers: Researcher education provided by companies can be broken down into education for newly-hired employees and education designed to help employees improve their specialized field knowledge and develop in their specialisms. Newly-hired Yakult Honsha employees first receive general training provided by the Personnel Department before being assigned to the Yakult Central Institute for Microbiological Research, where they receive training lasting about six months during which they are rotated through each of the research groups. This training process allows new employees to fully identify the challenges currently being addressed by Yakult Central Institute and to also deepen their mutual understanding with all other institute staff members. The training concerned enables management to assess individual new employees' personalities, foreign language skills, and adaptability and to provide them with an opportunity to conduct research outside of Japan at a young age.

While specialized field education is provided to newly-hired employees through on-the-job-training after their assignment to research groups, management continues to implement a variety of initiatives to support this training. Examples of such initiatives include: the implementation of joint research with domestic universities and public research organizations; the organizing of company-funded seminars; the secondment of researchers to overseas (European) research organizations; the running of joint research with overseas research organizations; researcher exchanges; and the hosting of international symposiums.