

# Japanese Like Doing Small Things

It seems that many Japanese like doing minute work. Put in another way, even when we think it is a bother, we end up doing small things, sometimes requiring meticulous care, because not doing so bothers us. I have been collecting caps of plastic bottles for about two years because there are collection boxes for them in town and also at schools. When a certain amount of bottle caps is collected, they are sold to recycling businesses. The proceeds from such sales are donated to groups that send vaccines for children around the world. Vaccines are delivered to children waiting for vaccination in many countries through UNICEF and various other organizations. The system is quite simple.

A senior workplace colleague of mine who saw me collecting bottle caps quietly lost no time in gathering them at home and brought them to me. Not only that, she has installed a collection box in our office! I am curious to know how my colleagues and seniors will respond to it.

The nursery school that my child attends also has a collection bag for bottle caps. I hear that every month, children in the upper class count the number of caps collected.

Although Japanese people are lagging quite behind those in other countries in their desire to engage in volunteer activities, they get engrossed in this type of activity, being fond of "doing small things."

N. Harada

*A hand-made collection box with a sticker calling for cooperation in gathering plastic bottle caps: it was made by a senior office colleague with stunning swiftness and meticulous care.*

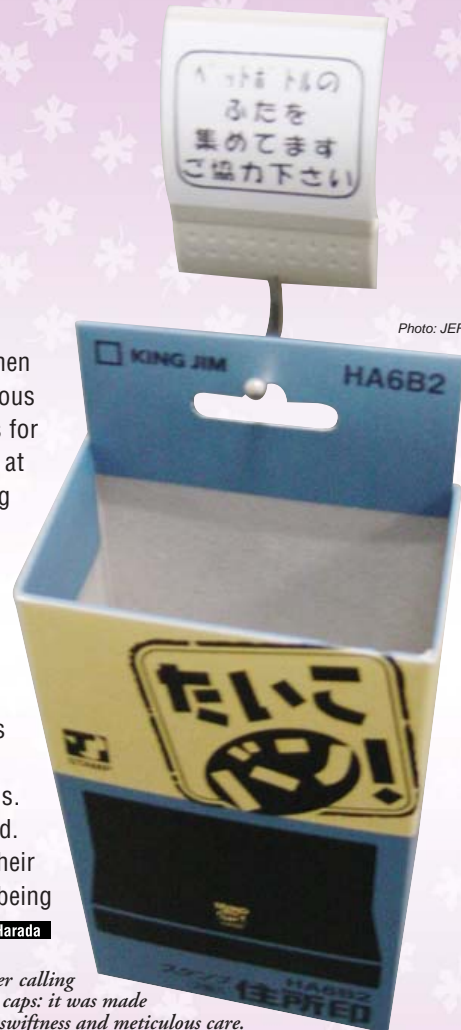


Photo: JEF

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