

A Day in the Life

Photos by Lucy Birmingham



The business day begins with rush hour. Newspapers are carefully folded and read standing up by the vast majority of commuters on crowded trains.



Everyone looks busy, partly because they are all on view in the communal Japanese office.

Lucy Birmingham is a freelance photographer living in Tokyo.



Lunch hour" is a misnomer, as a ten-minute visit to the company cafeteria is typical.



Marathon meetings are where the all-important consensus decisions are reached.



Although the career woman is a *rara avis*, companies depend on flocks of uniformed "O.L." (office ladies) to perform clerical and general office duties. Most O.L. retire upon marriage.



Overtime and after-hours business entertaining are still common, but in the 1980s businessmen usually make it home in time for a bath, a change of clothes and a relaxed family dinner.