

CASE STUDY

Luis Costigan

Background

Luis has always had an international lifestyle. Before university, he took a gap year to work at a video game company as their sales person for French and Spanish clients, having achieved A-levels in Spanish and French. Feeling that he had perfected his Spanish and French, Luis decided to pursue a new language when he entered university and chose Japanese. Luis attended Cardiff University in Wales with a study abroad year split between Valencia, Spain and Chuo University in Tokyo, Japan. After graduating from university, Luis began working at a building site while doing free translating work in Spain, Wales, and England before moving into full-time paid freelance translating work. After a year, he moved to Japan to teach English and do translation work before joining his current company, Dai-job.com.

Reasons for Participating

Currently, Luis is the project manager for a website designed to help foreign exchange students find jobs in Japanese companies, and he would like to have full responsibility over the project. Luis had never had any formal business training, however, so he needed to learn quickly the practical steps involved with financials, management, marketing, etc. Because JMEC is a practical, hands-on, and relatively short course aimed at equipping people with those skills, Luis thought it would be the perfect program to give him the skills he would need to achieve his goal.

JMEC Experience

Luis and his team were given a project in a market in which none of them had any experience. The company already had an agency in Japan and wanted a business plan for how to sell a new product through the existing agency. Initially, Luis and his team attempted to contact companies and associations working in that industry in Japan, but quickly realized that finding the right people to contact was going to be nearly impossible due to the specialized nature of the product. This led to a tactical pivot by the team and they began to contact companies responsible for selling to the end-sellers. Though this was a very challenging project, Luis feels that it was highly rewarding as it taught him not only how to be flexible in executing a plan, but how it gave him insight into how to go about market research.

Going Forward

Luis hopes to use this experience in the short term to take more responsibility for his current projects at work. In the long term, Human Group, which owns Dai-job.com, is budgeting to have 20% of revenue come from abroad by 2020 of which Dai-job.com will be a significant

contributor. Luis hopes that the training he has gained with JMEC will qualify him to spearhead this new international project, and perhaps eventually become a country manager with Dai-job.com.

Message to Future Participants

“If you do want to start your own company, or if you do want to work with a company and potentially be a country manager in Japan, or a country manager in another country, JMEC gives you that experience. I highly recommend doing JMEC. Be prepared to give up a lot of your time and sacrifice a lot of your personal interests to be able to do it. However, as a bonus of doing the program you are actually able to *save* money by participating in JMEC as well. Even if the course fee is ¥125,000, you are able to save money because you won’t be able to go out on Friday and Saturday nights. I found that my bank balance was a bit higher than I expected after this six or seven months.”