

## **Retracted memo October 2014 regarding change of working conditions**

By now you have all seen the new memo, 2015-009 sent out by MGT on January 30th, announcing that they would postpone the changes to working conditions until the second half of the year. It's not over yet.

MGT lists 3 reasons for the change.

### **1).To improve the level of customer service.**

If they mean they want the teachers more involved in the students' overall Berlitz experience why not allot more office/method units so staff and teachers can sit down and discuss issues and suggestions for students' improvement? It could be as simple as scheduling office/methods with the student counsellors once a day or a couple of times a week to review or plan, but on paid time, please.

The company already has the expectation of making teachers work between lessons. Go check your IPE evaluation sheets for the grading criteria. Look for phraseology: proactive, speaks to staff about student issues, doesn't wait for staff to approach with questions. That would take place on non-teaching and unpaid time. You have to remove the iPad from the room on breaks. You must return the iPad from the room to the charger. Having staff speak to you on breaks about the students' next books or how they work in a group is unpaid work on a student break.

The staff rooms are so small they are difficult for people to go into and just sit for 5 minutes. You need to wait to get

material or your iPad in or out of the charger. The company does not make it easy for us to be able to take a break. Does your staffroom have a seat for each employee on duty?



Being paid for that work has been a union demand since 2007. Think about this- when a secretary talks to you on the break, he/she is working and being paid. You are not being paid. MGT tells us the breaks are for us to relax, but we still have to do things on our breaks. Secretaries are not docked for toilet breaks. The company treats each of our breaks as a possible toilet break so therefore they do not want to pay for it - even when we work/are asked to work on our break. We already are working on our break so recognize it and give us our back pay for the past two years.

### **2)To make the offer attractive to current employees**

If you want to make the job more attractive to employees give us a raise! Berlitz has not given a full across the board pay raise to teaching staff in 20 years.\* A few years ago Berlitz cut the increases in performance pay into half so if the best level got 6 steps up so it was a 60 yen increase, now it looks more like 6 steps equals 30 yen. That says it all.

Income tax was raised, sales tax went up and we have inflation creeping up. MGT told us when they raised prices they would give us a pay increase. And Mr. Abe has allowed the government to lower corporate tax rate so Berlitz will pay less tax. The idea behind this was to

free up money for companies to pay more to their workers.

If you want to make the system more attractive, make sure that current teachers get the same or better number of lessons to teach and that all 40/40 teachers are doing at least 5 non-teaching units in their week so others can get per lessons.

\*(The union members in 2012 received an across the board pay adjustment as part of the court mediated settlement to the 2007-2008 strike.)

### **3)To simplify our salary system**

Really? In 1988 there were three types of contract- 3! Now there are over 10 with different types of pay systems. The employees are not responsible for the complex salary system which has included heavier burdened smaller unit paying contracts every decade. The easiest way simplify the salary system would be an across the board raise - not another contract which would upset salaries by taking away available per lessons from other employees already in the company.

### **Kids lessons are upon us**

Be prepared, the company is already starting up with registering kids for kids lessons. Traditionally kids lessons were only in the suburban schools but now it looks like Berlitz is going to have them in LCs even in the city centers.

You might notice colorful displays popping up and dedicated kids rooms. This is all part of the company's synergizing with our parent company, Benesse. Benesse subsidiaries will be working more closely with Berlitz in the future.

### **Paying dues by automatic transfer**

Check with the Treasurer at [begunto1@yahoo.com](mailto:begunto1@yahoo.com) if you are interested in doing automatic dues payments. It is convenient and saves you the hassle of transferring it yourself.

### **Shunto 2015 Demands for collective bargaining**

#### **Shunto Demands 2015**

1. Rescind the yearly renewable contract - go back to the automatically renewed contract
2. The company work with the union to improve the quality of the materials
3. Reduce teacher turn over
4. CTL/no show policy be uniform as in past practice for new employees
5. New instructors be governed by same arrival and leaving time as current teaching staff as in past practice
6. Because of tuition increases and sales tax going from 5% to 8% Begunto demands a 3% base increase for all employees of seniority, performance and rank
7. One month bonus for all employees
8. Pay for work during non-scheduled work time
9. The company negotiate with and obtain the consent of Begunto before implementing any policy change or initiating any new policy
10. Company immediately re-enroll all teachers kicked off Shakai Hoken or private pension scheme
11. The company enroll all employees who wish to be on Shakai Hoken
12. The company pay five minute intervals before and after each scheduled unit of work at the instructor's unit rate
13. The company provide safety training for all employees
14. Raise pay scale ceiling

**Union Applications available on line at our website.**