Entry #2 - 06/07/2022

Wednesday 6th July 2022 Diary Entry

Themes Explored Today

1. Personal Goal Setting (Japan ALT with Altia Central & Software Development)
2. Approach to Software Development Jobhunting
3. Self-Realisation (My Own Value)

Personal Goal Setting (ALT into Software Development in Japan)

As I may have touched upon in my previous diary entry, I used to live in Japan from August 2016 - August 2020, but after being unsuccessful in my job-hunting I decided to return to the UK and try my luck here. Long story short is that it was the case of the "Grass is greener on the other side" story, and instead I have taken time to address my own issues with atypical depression and mindset towards what I wanted for my own future.

And so after putting "Software Development" on a pedestal for a long period of time that I can't even recall because it's been so long since I've been idolising the industry, I've got my feet wet with Udemy Tutorial Classes and finally started to explore creations of my own projects with HTML/CSS/JavaScript (Express/MongoDB/Node - Currently not yet picked up React), and even recently started a project for the new Octopath Traveler: Champions of the Continent game that will be released in English for the global audience in July 27th 2022.

Although that aside, my "end-goal" would be to get a Software Development Job in Japan because the 4-years I was in Japan made me fall in love with the language and country, and so the combination of the both will be the "end-goal", but in reality that's where I believe it will all start.

So during this current year of 2022, I have had a dilemna of going to Japan hopefully this August/September and sticking it out for a year as an ALT (Assistant Language Teacher) at a dispatch company, or to spend many more months on entry-level Junior Software Developer roles in the UK, work for a year and then try to find work in Japan.

And after a lot of consideration; the answer that I have found in my heart would be to return to Japan in August/September as an ALT and work there for a year, and the few months before my contract is due to end, hopefully get a job offer as an entry-level Junior Software Developer working with exciting technologies.

As of writing this diary entry, I will be having my final interview with an ALT Dispatch Company called "ALTIA Central" which is considered by most previous ALTs as the best ALT company to work with besides the official JET Programme (Japanese Exchange Teaching Programme) because they provide 40,000円 - 50,000円 more than their competitors, do not prorate you in August and even pay you in full, and really do care about their ALTs, so I really hope that I pass the interview and get selected. Because I mean why would they not hire someone who has:

- Lived in Japan for 4-years;
- Speaks Japanese at a fluent level;
- Interested in living in Japan for the long-term/permanently;
- English-native with a university degree for easy sponsorship;

And so the tldr for my personal goals would be to:

1. Work as an ALT for ALTIA Central (September 2022 - September 2023) & Network with companies/recruiters before August/September 2022 and the months before to get job offer.
2. Work on my Japanese;
3. Continue learning about Software Development (React/React Native/Vue) Etc.

Approach to Software Development Jobhunting

When I was researching on how people who managed to self-teach themselves Software Development without a degree or intensive bootcamp, one of the things that you often see are "Coding Exercises/Tests" and such that are almost mandatory for you to essentially pass through to the behavioural/remaining sections of the interview process.

And so, that's got me thinking deeply about what type of interview processes are great at being able to pull an understanding of how a certain candidate is, and so here are a few questions that I would consider asking to the hiring manager(s) or the recruiter(s) that will be your main points of contact when you're looking to get your feet wet with their interview process:

1. What type of format are the "Code Tests/Exercises"?

I believe that asking the people who are in charge of the code tests/exercises about what type of format they adopt to interview their candidates allows for the candidates to see what type of company they are.

This is because I have seen companies that expect you to try and write a full-fledged full-stack project with search functions & CRUD Operations with a functional database, which are unpaid and this screams to me that this is not something that you should be essentially wasting your time on working for free.

But on the other hand, if it's solving fundamental problems such as creating a function that takes in an array of strings and you have to return another array with only even strings, then this shows that the company understands the most important thing about working for a software development company: "YOU ARE WORKING AS A TEAM TO DEVELOP PRODUCTS/SERVICES". When you're self-teaching

yourself with tutorials and building your own projects you are focused on only being able to create things BY YOURSELF, but that is NOT the case with a company. You are working AS A TEAM on different parts of the project, collaborating and asking for help from one another to provide VALUE to stakeholders.

2. Would I be able to use Google/Stackoverflow or ask YOU for help?

This is another important question to address with the people in charge of the interview process. Because it already sets you up for success because here is how you will come across to them:

- Someone who seems to be humble AND (Most importantly) is NOT afraid to ask for help.

As you work as a Software Developer, you are primarily a problem-solver at heart and will be working as part of a team. If you don't ask if you can ask for help willingly, then it can come across to the hiring team that you have "ego" and refuse help, which can even slow progress for their company's team because you weren't willing to ask for help when you really did need it.

And let's be honest, it doesn't matter which level of seniority (Junior/Senior, especially as a Junior), in that you don't exactly know anything going into the role/company, and so it's actually better to be constantly asking questions to satiate your curiosity and build a solid fundamental understanding.

3. What type of problem are you currently trying to solve at your company?

Lastly, this question will keep the employers on their toes. Because it shows you are interested in what type of problems that their company is trying to solve at the moment, and can be a way for you to propose your own thoughts and possible solutions, and to really show them what value you have and can bring if they were to take you onboard into their team.

Important Point 1: Do not give up even if you "Fail" the exercises

This is obviously important because if you're essentially hired to solve problems for a company and you were to throw in the towel before the problem was solved, then this reflects on you in the future. What if you were hired and couldn't solve a problem they wanted and ended up giving up on solving it? Right.

Important Point 2: Remain Humble

One of the most dangerous things in life, especially as a Software Developer or person within the Tech industry is "ego". Remaining humble will allow you to keep on learning and developing yourself both as a human being, and as a Software Developer.

Self-Realisation of Personal Value

This is just a small section for a small-reminder of my personal value:

1. Native in English & Fluent in Japanese (N2);
2. Problem-solver at heart: Break down problems into smaller chunks and work hard on individually solving each issue;
3. Humble & don't give up;
4. Genuinely curious;