

Welcome! —Introducing Our New Members—  
Please allow me to introduce new members of HEXEL TECH ENGINEERING and the Global Management Department.



## From HEXEL TECH ENGINEERING Corp.

Hello! My name is Shohei Hosoya, and I work for HEXEL TECH ENGINEERING.

I was transferred to the company on January 27, 2020. My work entails manning the support desk for Japanese customers, sending along requests for quotations and questions from customers to the local staff, and confirming that the details of the quotations are correct.

When I first started, I found communication to be difficult and also extremely important. It can be hard to understand the specifics of a customer

request when communication is made only through writing. If I assume what a customer wants to know and respond to them based on this “best guess,” then my response could cause issues for the customer as well as the local staff. In particular, when it comes to questions about techniques, I have to carefully ensure that both of us are talking about the same thing.

Although there is still much for me to learn about life at the company, I believe I will continue to enjoy my work here.



**Shohei Hosoya**  
Sales Engineer

## From HEXEL Works Global Management Department

I was transferred to the Global Management Department in April 2020.

I am currently assigned to the main office in Tokyo. After a short while, I will be joining our overseas team in working on several military construction projects on the Pacific island of Guam, a four-hour flight from Tokyo.

Hopefully, I will be able to put to use what I learned during my time with my

previous team working on military projects here in Japan.

I am looking forward to another great experience in a new environment and plan to learn a lot from our veteran employees on Guam. It is really exciting to know that I can be a part of something unique. I will do my best to help further boost our reputation and influence regarding our overseas operations.



**Rafael Marte Perez Yambot**  
Electrical Engineer

### Editorial Note

Hi. My name is Takao Nagae, and I'm the editor of The Innovator newsletter.

I previously worked as an assistant editor on the newsletter, but for this issue I collected articles, arranged vendors, and prepared content as the editor. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, all events in Japan were canceled, including our ceremonies. So, I needed to think hard about the content as well as setting a theme at the early stages of editing this issue. I decided to emphasize how our company was cheerfully getting through this difficult time.

I am thinking of dramatically changing the design of the next issue. I want to make our newsletter a bit cooler, and am thinking to include a cover and to change the texture of the paper. Please look forward to Issue 05!

This newsletter was prepared by members of the Global Management Department.



**Takayuki Sakamoto**  
Overseas Division Director and Managing Executive Officer



**Miki Nobuui**  
Sales/General Manager



**Anfernee Kuo**  
Strategic Planning Manager



**Kaori Sekiguchi**  
Administrative Manager



**Hitomi Nakamura**  
Administrative Assistant



**Takao Nagae**  
General Representative

# The 2020 ISSUE 04 Innovator

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## Our Current Status



Blue Impulse, the Japanese Air Force's acrobatics team, doing a flyover of Tokyo in a show of respect and appreciation to those on the medical frontlines (Photo taken near our corporate headquarters)

This newsletter is mainly distributed to our clients in Guam, Los Angeles, the Philippines, and Japan. And while all of our clients must be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, we hope everyone is staying healthy and doing well.

Japan has also been greatly affected by COVID-19, and we are particularly worried about its impact on the economy. The number of overseas tourists had been rapidly increasing over the last few years. In 2019, as many as 31.88 million people visited Japan, with the economic benefit of this totaling approximately ¥4.8 trillion. This increase in the number of tourists boosted the construction of hotels, and Japanese towns were filled

with tourists. Now, we hardly see any tourists. At the same time, our company has continued with construction work at almost all sites without a break. We cannot stop work on a construction project unless the client agrees, and this is a structural problem of Japanese contractor agreements. Also, since the construction industry greatly contributes to society, the suspension of works causes serious damage to the economy. This is another reason why we cannot stop our construction works.

The impact on our gains and losses has so far been mild, so the settlement of accounts ending September should remain unchanged. However, with regard to contracts in the future, tourism-related projects such as hotel construction have either been postponed or stopped. As such, we think the settlement of accounts after the next term will inevitably be affected. Also, our University of the Philippines (U.P.) recruitment activities and hiring of engineers from the Philippines are

currently abated. The current situation will have a marked influence on securing human resources from a mid-term perspective.

There was no compulsory lockdown in Japan. However, a state of emergency, which required us to voluntarily restrict our activities, was declared, and many employees started to work from home. This was a rather new concept for many here in Japan. We set about this telework using Microsoft Teams, Zoom, and Slack. However, some disadvantages of working from home have revealed themselves, such as increased employee stress in some instances and interruption of the flow of information. It will be important to work quickly to resolve these problems.

Although the impact of COVID-19 is immeasurable, we will choose to view it as an opportunity to make the quality of our work better and keep on challenging ourselves.

We will definitely resume recruiting talent from U.P. once the situation allows. Until then, please stay safe and well!



**TAKAYUKI SAKAMOTO**  
Overseas Division Director and Managing Executive Officer

# Feature 1 Stay Home = Enjoy at Home



A state of emergency was declared in Japan on April 7, 2020. As a result of this, we introduced telework, a new concept for our company. New employees were required to be on standby at home during business hours and received online training for a month. In this issue, we share the voices of several of the employees who worked from home and provide an overview of the support provided to new employees who were required to be on standby at home.

## The Challenges of Telework for Japanese Companies

A typical Japanese company's approach to business is to work as a team. For example, when an employee takes a leave of absence, his or her supervisor or a colleague takes over for the absent employee to avoid inconveniencing clients. At the beginning of the COVID-19

pandemic, many Japanese companies encouraged their employees to work from home. This proved difficult, however, because of this traditional "work as a team" mindset. We realized rather quickly that we had to figure out a better way for employees who worked

from home to communicate with those still in the office. We were able to accomplish this by using online tools such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, and Slack, thereby eliminating many of the difficult hurdles to telework in the process.

## A New Employee's Struggle



Lucas Niegel Reodica Cabading



John Eric Tagorda Martin

### What do you find difficult about being on standby at home?

The most troublesome part would be resisting the urge to go outside. Whenever I want to take a break from work or studies, I would usually go for a walk to refresh my mind. Due to this current situation, however, I refrain from going outside unnecessarily. As such, I sometimes feel as if I'm locked up in my room.

### What do you do while you're on standby at home?

On weekdays, I have Japanese classes and also electrical construction management and electrician training classes. Both classes are quite interesting, but especially the construction management classes since we get to learn what we'll be doing as

construction engineers, as well as the necessary knowledge for us to pass the Second-Class Electrician examination. Aside from classes, I try to watch anime or Japanese dramas without the subtitles, as I find it helpful in improving my listening comprehension skills. Also, almost every day I try to talk with my family, girlfriend, and friends back in the Philippines. Our frequent talks help to keep me from missing them so much.

### What do you enjoy while on standby at home?

Living in the dormitory, the most delicious meal of the day for me is always dinner, and so every day I look forward to that. My favorite so far is the sweet and sour pork. If possible, I would love for Hikaru-san to teach me how to cook this dish, as I think I could probably eat it for a week straight.

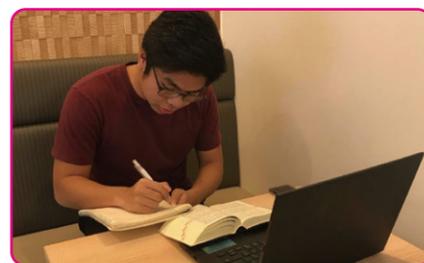
### What do you think about the online Japanese lessons?

Since coming to Japan, there are still parts of my Japanese abilities that I felt were lacking. So, having Japanese classes again was an unexpected boon. At the start of each



class, we report on the news which we researched the previous day and afterward we give our impressions on it. Reading the news has helped me to increase my kanji comprehension, and giving my impressions has really improved how I explain myself in Japanese.

**We here at HEXEL Works look forward to your future success!**



## A Lifestyle Change for Everyone!

A lockdown is in effect in Guam and Los Angeles, where our overseas offices are located. While in Japan a state of emergency has been declared, requiring people to refrain from going outside. Below, we report on how work and life have changed in each area under these conditions.



## Employee Reports from Our Branches

### A Look at Working from Home in Japan



This was my first time working from home. At the start, I was worried that I would be unable to perform my job to the fullest from home, but once I got used to it I was able to work more efficiently than I had expected. We used a cloud service, such as Dropbox, to check estimates and communicate with customers online. In addition, we were able to share information within the department using IT tools such as Slack and Zoom.

The only part of my sales job that bothered

me while working from home was when I needed to negotiate with a customer. Maybe this is unique to Japan, but because of the "face-to-face" culture here I felt somewhat uncomfortable making requests to a new customer via email or video conference, and also when contacting an existing customer that I had not been in contact with in a long while. I found it particularly challenging during final contract negotiations to get a sense of what the customer was thinking, as I would

normally be able to do when meeting in person through their mannerisms and body language. However, I wonder if it is normal to negotiate online even in foreign countries, as you are unable to see each other completely. This telework experience provided me with a good opportunity to identify my own work, sort out unnecessary and urgent tasks, and think about how to better improve my efficiency.

**Miki Nobuuj**  
Sales/General Manager

### A Glimpse at the Situation on Guam



The first cases of COVID-19 were confirmed on Guam on March 15, 2020, and the island's Governor was quick to respond. The next day schools and nonessential government offices were closed and soon after public parks, beaches, and most businesses followed.

Things are slowly getting back to normal here on Guam, with some businesses now open to the public. This signals a positive move in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.

To experience this kind of health emergency, with no vaccine yet created and the fact that it can easily spread from person to person, is certainly a big scare. The instinct to panic and worry about if you might get infected, who is infected, and who tested

positive is perhaps the most worrying part right now for us because we still go out to work, especially when there is an ongoing military project. So, during this lockdown I am trying to stay positive and to take care of my health so that I don't get sick or need to visit a clinic. Accordingly, I stay at home on weekends, practice proper hygiene, and stay up to date on how to protect myself, how the virus spreads, and any relevant government policies. This is how I go about being responsible as an individual. I only go out to buy food enough for a week. While out, I always wear a mask and practice social distancing, and when I return home I practice proper hygiene. I am obviously a little worried also for my family back in the Philippines, but

everything is fine there. Communicating with them daily really helps out.

I will continue to hope and pray that everyone remains well during these difficult times, and I appreciate deeply the efforts of those heroes on the medical frontlines who are risking their lives to help others.

Stay safe, everyone.



**ROMEL CONSTANTINO**  
Estimation Engineer

### COVID-19 & Stay at Home!

The whole world is going through the biggest crisis we have ever witnessed, COVID-19. As a result, the local government here has issued "stay at home" orders and only essential services are to remain open. All other businesses may operate from home to the extent possible. Thankfully, the nature of my work makes it relatively easy to comply with the stay at home orders. To use my time efficiently at home, the first thing I did was create a boundary between work and personal life. This means to physically and mentally self-isolate from the rest of the house

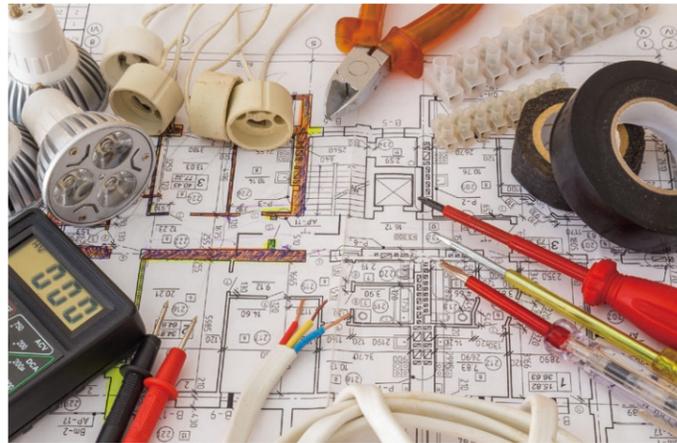
during work hours. Second, I made sure to exercise. As I am not commuting to work now, I can use that time to exercise. Even a low-intensity workout will boost energy levels so that I can accomplish my to-do list more effectively. Also, taking time to learn something new is definitely a productive measure. More technical research online is helping me to better understand in-depth details of the work I do. In addition, weekends can be wisely used to learn new skills such as patio and interior décor with summer plants, cooking, and more! Fighting loneliness is also extremely important.

Social life is highly missed since the lockdown. Virtually connecting with your family, friends, and colleagues will help with this immensely.



**Arjun Muraleedharan**  
Electrical Engineer





## What Is a Second-Class Electrician?

Second-Class Electrician is a national qualification in Japan that is awarded to those who have achieved expertise in electrical work. Those with this qualification are allowed to work on ordinary houses and electrical facilities with power no higher than 600V. Our three employees from the Philippines passed the examination this year. All of those who passed this year worked together to organize a workshop for this exam for new employees. More employees are expected to pass the examination in the future.

I had the opportunity to interview employees who passed this year and also who participated in the workshop.

## Filipino Employees Pass the Examination for Second-Class Electrician

All three employees from the Philippines who recently took the Second-Class Electrician exam—San Pedro Erwin Jan L., Pitiquen Abednego Brenn Carlo Solon, and Rafael Marte Perez Yambot—successfully passed! In my talks with them, I asked if they would comment on their experience for the benefit of employees who will be taking the exam in the future.

### Q How did you successfully manage your work and study?

Over the few months leading up to the exam, during break times, I made it a habit to read online feedback from previous exam takers; searching and collecting possible references that I could use to review. This was just to warm up and to help establish the mindset that I should start studying as soon as possible.

One month before the exam, whenever time allowed during work hours, I would browse online and try to answer even just a few problems. However, most of my studying was done at home. On weekdays after work, I would allot 1–2 hours to answer problems or try to create a circuit.

On weekends, I would do the same but for roughly 3–4 hours each day.

### Q What did you find most difficult about the examination?

The exam has two parts, written and practical skills. Those taking the exam will only be allowed to take the practical skills portion after successfully passing the written part. To be honest, I found the written part to be relatively easy. Familiarize yourself with the question types and exam patterns and you can probably ace it.

The practical skills part was more challenging as you are only allowed 40 minutes to finish the given problem. I recall that during the last two minutes I noticed I wasn't able to connect a certain wire and so I had to redo a part

of the circuit, and then panic started to get the best of me. Luckily, I passed the exam and no one was hit by the wires that flew across to another table when I hastily cut them just to finish the exam at the last second.



San Pedro Erwin Jan L.

### Q Do you have any advice to offer employees who will be taking the examination in the future?

Having very little time to study for any exam will definitely make anyone anxious during the actual exam. As much as possible, try to reduce the number of overtime hours during the month of the exam to be able to allot a few minutes each day for practice and study. From day one, hang out with the

foremen and your coworkers during work hours to learn the tricks of the trade. Always ask questions. This can be something as simple as names for things or as specific as the reason behind certain processes and choices. The truth of the matter is nothing beats being prepared, but the most important thing to remember is not forgetting to breathe. Breathe. It's just an exam.



Pitiquen Abednego Brenn Carlo Solon



## Thoughts on the Workshop



### What made you decide to organize a workshop?

I had a hard time when I studied for the electrician examination, and so I decided to organize a workshop.

What I found really difficult was the language. When I studied using books, it took time to read the kanji and katakana. As such, I needed more time for study than the Japanese employees did.

If there is a superior from the same country as the exam takers who has firsthand experience with taking the

exam, then this could be helpful in making it faster and easier for examinees to acquire the qualification. This was my reason for wanting to organize a workshop.

### Main contents of the workshop

The examination for electricians is comprised of a written portion and a practical skills portion. In the workshop, I focused mainly on the practical skills part.

I taught participants practical skills



such as “how to use tools” and “how to build an electrical circuit.” The reason for teaching these practical skills is so employees can get used to work at the site more quickly. With participants familiar with these skills, this should make it easier for them to imagine the contents of the written examination. I thought this could raise the success rate of those taking the examination.

### Encouragement for the participants

It is my hope that participants in this workshop will acquire the qualification in their first year!



## Looking Back on the Workshop

**Lucas:** Since there were no classes on electrical work or construction management at my university, I was a little nervous when I first arrived at the work site. As such, I spent a lot of time studying textbooks on my own and looking up the correct terminology. At Rafael's workshop, I learned about the flow of construction management at work sites, from the construction of a temporary foundation to the construction inspection.

I hope to also organize a workshop in the future so that I can help young employees like Rafael has.

**Eric:** I learned how to use the tools to build an electrical circuit at the workshop for practical skills.

What I found difficult in this workshop was making a loop for a lamp receptacle. If a loop is too big, it may interfere with electrical wires and screws, which is a failure. I experienced this many times. After watching YouTube videos showing practical skills and receiving advice from Rafael, I finally succeeded in making a loop. What I was able to learn in this workshop were basic skills. Going forward, I will practice many

techniques and study for the written examination to acquire the qualifications necessary to become an electrician.



# Thank You for Visiting Our Booth

## Talks with U.P. Students

### My first time joining a job fair



Hello, everyone! My name is Takao Nagae, and I'm a member of the Global Recruitment Team!

We participated again this year in the job fair held at the University of the Philippines (U.P.) Diliman. The job fair is a recruitment fair organized by students of the university. We

participated in the fair from February 4 to 7, 2020. This was the sixth year for us to take part in this event, and an increasing number of students are now familiar with our company's name. Also, we separately organized our selection meeting during the same period, with 45 students joining in this year. It was the first time for me to participate in this job fair, and I was surprised to learn that so many students were interested in our company. Company employees who had graduated from U.P. gave a detailed explanation about the work done on the sites and helped students better understand our company. I look forward to seeing some of them as future colleagues.



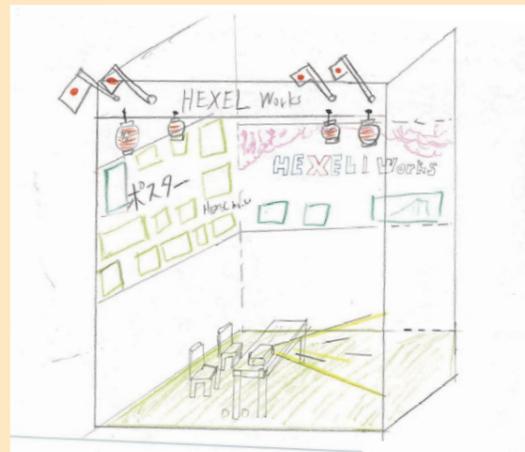
### Booth design

Many other companies also participated in the job fair, and so we thought we had better design our booth to really attract students.

We researched what companies attracted the attention of students, and many students appeared interested in Japanese anime and technologies.

As such, we adorned our booth with Japanese flags and decorations such as lanterns, to highlight that we are a Japanese company.

Since it was a job fair ("fair" = festival (*matsuri* in Japanese)), we put the kanji character 祭 (*matsuri*) on the lanterns to help create a fun and cheerful atmosphere.



My drawing of the booth concept



### Delay in selection

We are sorry to say that due to COVID-19, we are now stopping the selection process. Once the situation has returned to normal, we will restart selection immediately. Again, we apologize for the delay.

## Topics

### Beginning Sales for New Materials

HEXEL TECH ENGINEERING Corp. began its business by procuring electrical materials made in the United States for electrical work within U.S. military bases in Japan for HEXEL Works. Since then, we have been able to establish a network of manufacturers and material traders as well as gain a solid understanding of business customs in the United States. We work to make the most of these resources and of our proposal abilities to ensure optimum logistics, and are currently selling American electrical materials to subcontractors other than

HEXEL Works. We will deploy our sales of American materials for architecture and facilities in the future.

In terms of our procurement of American materials, we believe it is important to inform customers about the procurement status from order to delivery, in addition to delivering the right materials on time. Our customers want the materials to be delivered in time for the construction work process and are concerned about delays in the delivery of the materials they order. The customers worry because they cannot see what is

happening to the materials along the way from the United States to Japan. We try to avoid delays by contacting the carriers as needed and to notify our customers of the delivery status.

We will focus on expanding sales so that HEXEL TECH ENGINEERING will be well recognized as a company that can procure American materials for construction work within U.S. military bases in Japan. If you know of companies in your area that are having difficulty in procuring American materials, please let us know.



### Debut of Our New Work Clothes

Following the Company name change last October, we made a change to our work clothes in April. Prior to doing so, we stopped to ask ourselves, "Do we really need to wear these traditional-style work clothes?" So, we went back to the starting point and deliberated on both the reason for and function of our work clothes. We decided in the end to go with denim for our work pants,

discontinuing the need for traditional work clothes, and placed an order with an apparel manufacturer in Kojima, Okayama, famous globally for its denim. We discussed texture and thread in our meetings with the manufacturer, and emphasized how a stretchy material would make work easier. See for yourself how comfortably you can work in these new work clothes!

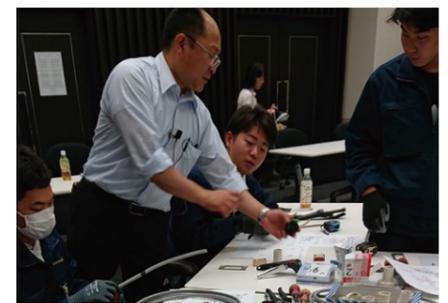
### Training to Become a Professional

In the Japanese construction industry, a new employee needs 5–10 years to become a full-fledged on-site representative.

We have a system in which new employees are trained to become a professional. New employees learn about their work in the order of "learn the work on the site," "run the site," and "manage the site" to become a professional. They learn safety awareness, acquire techniques passed on from senior employees, and study to acquire

qualification. The training program is not only for improving the techniques of the new employees but also for helping them make a habit of setting their work goals. As the result of our efforts, we ranked 181st among companies with the highest employee retention in 2019 (with a retention rate after three years of 89.5%). We will continue to support our new employees with our training program and also in many other aspects, aiming to achieve a higher ranking this year.

Source: (Toyo Keizai Online, published on Dec. 20, 2019)  
<https://toyokeizai.net/articles/-/320829>



## Projects for the U.S. Military

1. Yokosuka Pier 5, Yokosuka, Japan
2. Repair BEQ, Bldg. 222, Camp Foster Electrical Installation, Foster, Japan
3. Kadena Training Facility Electrical Equipment Construction, Kadena, Japan
4. Zama Camp Residential Area (Single-Person Households) Sprinkler Installation Work, Zama, Japan
5. ASAGAO Heights Whole House Revitalization, Yokosuka, Japan