

Chapter 5	Honorific expressions in a business setting	/
-----------	---	---

## 1. Types of honorific expressions and how to use them in specific situations

### 1.1 What is meant by 'honorific expression'?

Honorific expression is a language to express your respect to the person you are talking to or the people you talk about. It also plays a role in creating the proper distance between interlocutors. e.g. age, position, rank, feeling, etc.

Also, some people use honorific expressions improperly, or in a situation where honorific expressions are not necessary. There are also occasions where the use of so many honorifics makes the addressee wonder if the speaker is looking down on him/her in a kind of feigned politeness. Misuse of honorific expressions may sometimes damage the personal relationship. Let's use honorific expressions in consideration of time, place and occasion. For that purpose, you should get accustomed to using them on a day-to-day basis.

### 1.2 Types of honorific expressions and basic form of verb

#### ▼Three types of honorific expressions

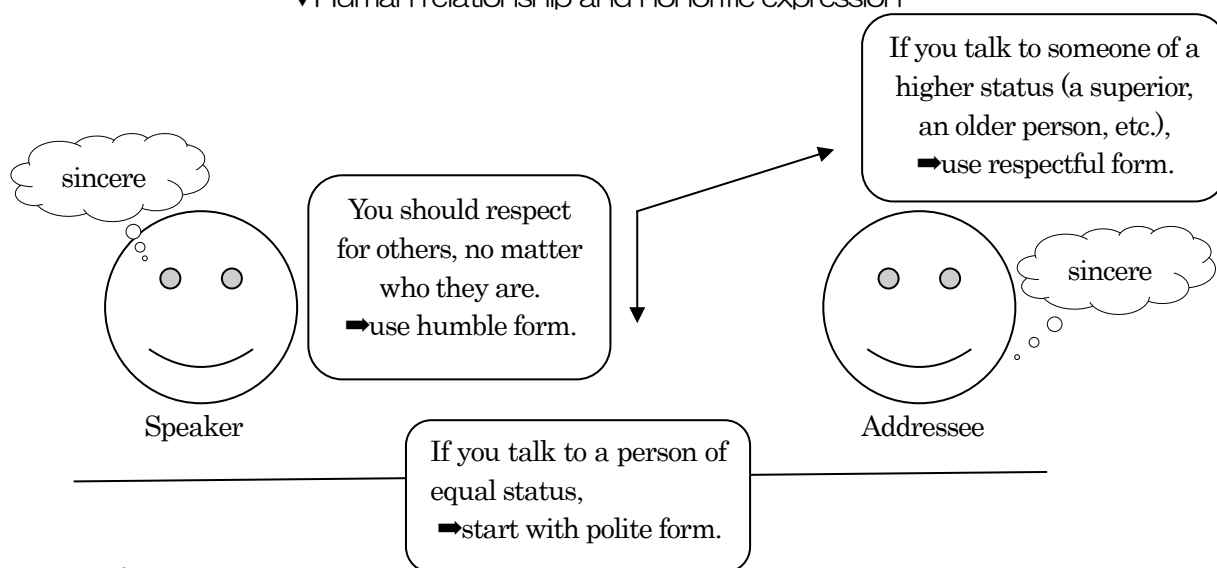
① Respectful form (sonkeigo)	It is used to express the deeds, situations and behaviors of the person you are talking with or referring to.	「Sensei ga shinbun wo oyomininaru」/「先生が新聞をお読みにになります」 「Sensei ga shinbun wo yomareru」/「先生が新聞を読まれる」
② Humble form (kenjyogo)	It is used to speak about yourself, members of your family or members of your affiliation, showing your respect to the person you are talking to by using humble words.	「Watashi ga omochiitashimasu」/「私がお待ちいたします」 「Haha ga mairimasu」/「母が参ります」
③ Polite form (teineigo)	It is used to talk in a polite way.	desu./です。～masu./ます。 ～degozaimasu./でございます。 Omeshimono/お召し物 ・gotanto/ご担当 ・onimotsu/お荷物

#### ▼Basic forms of honorific expressions

① Respectful form	o ～ ninaru /お～になる go ～ ninaru /ご～になる ～reru /～れる、 ～rareru ～られる	taberu /食べる	✕(Senseiga) otabeninaru. / (先生が) お食べになる。 / taebrareru /食べられる。 ✕omeshsagarininaru. /お召し上がりになる。 ※ <u>meshiagaru. /召し上がる。</u>
② Humble form	o ～ suru /お～す	Kiku	Watashi gaokikisuru. / (私が) お聞きする。

	る itasu /いたす go ~ suru. /ご～する	/聞く	※haichoususru /拝聴する・uketamawaru /承る
③Polite form	～desu. /～です。 ～masu. /kara ます。 ～gozaimasu. /～ ございます		yomimasu. /読みます。 Heisha no shacho no Yanashita degozaimasu. 弊社の社長の山下でございます。

▼Human relationship and honorific expression



♪ work ♪

▼Fill out the following with respectful forms and humble forms

Original form	(other is subject) Respectful form	(I is subject) Humble form
(someone ga) iru / (人が) いる		
suru /する		
kuru /来る		
iku /行く		
iu /言う		
miru /見る		
kiku /聞く		
shitteiru / 知っている		
taberu /食べる		
morau /もらう		

※Do not use double honorifics

▼How to call yourself and others

Yourself, your company	Watakushi /わたくし・watakushidomo /わたくしども・wagasha /我が社・tosha /当社・heisha /弊社
Other company	onsha /御社 (speaking word /話しことば and writing word /書きことば, allowed both situation) ○○kaishasama /○○会社様 ginko /銀行⇒ onko /御行 (speaking word, writing word, allowed both situation) kiko /貴行 (writing word /書きことば) gakko /学校⇒ onko /御校 (speaking word, writing word, allowed both situation)、kiko /貴校 (only writing word)
Your superior (to others)	bucho no ○○ /部長の○○ (job title & just call /呼び捨て)
Other company's person	○○kacho /○○課長 (様)、○○kacho-sama /○○課長様 ※If you didn't know his/her job title, you would put 'sama' behind his/her surname. /役職が不明な場合は○○様
Unknown person of other company	achira no kata /あちらの方、kochira no kata /こちらの方、etc. /等

♪ work ♪

Q1 : It is not sufficient only to use honorific expressions in business conversation.  
Consider in a group what things other than honorifics are necessary to note.

Q2 : Make a list of points for agreeable ways of speaking.

- ・
- ・
- ・
- ・
- ・

## 2. Claims about speech and attitude

▼Read the following case examples and consider.

### Case example ①

A man in his late fifties visited a ladies' accessories section at a department store to look for a present for a wedding anniversary. As he hadn't been in such a store before, he felt unfamiliar and a little embarrassed with so many women around. He set about looking for a twentieth wedding anniversary gift that he hoped his wife would love.

Response of a clerk at the department store: Immediately after the man started walking

around, a young female sales clerk went to assist him. He wanted to ask her about the store's goods as he had little knowledge about what it offered. However, the sales clerk started asking many questions, such as: 'Are you looking for a present for your wife?', 'Is it a birthday present or something?', 'How old is your wife?', 'What kind of price are you looking at?', etc. When he was thinking about how to answer, she started recommending something,



saying: 'This is a real bargain. You'll get a 30% discount'. He felt a little offended as he wondered if he looked like a man who cares only about the price. Looking at the expression on his face, the sales clerk then started flattering the man, saying: 'Wow, you must be such a nice husband to give a wedding anniversary present to your wife! She's so lucky, I envy her!'

Her attention began to make him feel self-conscious and he no longer felt relaxed looking for a present.

♪ work ♪

Q1 : How do you think the sales clerk can improve her work style?

<Points to improve>

<After improvement>

MEMO

### Case example ②

Ms. A has been working for a trade company for five years. She doesn't put on airs and is trusted by her senior section chief, Mr. B. The following is their conversation:

Mr. B: 'Ms. A, have you seen the contract with C Company?'

Ms. A: 'What are you talking about? It's on your desk!'

Mr. B: 'Oh, I must've spaced out for a moment. I've just received it from you.'

Ms. A: 'Hey, straighten up.'



♪ work ♪

Q3 : You were visiting this company and happened to hear this conversation. What kind of impression did you get from it?

Q4 : If you were in A's position, how would you respond? What kind of words would you use?

< Response >

< Conversation >

Mr. B: 'Ms. A, have you seen the contract with C Company?'

Ms. A: '\_\_\_\_\_'

Mr. B: 'Oh, I must've spaced out for a moment. I've just received it from you.'

Ms. A: '\_\_\_\_\_']

Q5 : How do you think Mr. B should change his attitude?

**【Post-learning task】**

♪♪♪ Case Studies ♪♪♪

【Q1.】 While your senior (accounting manager) was out, the sales manager told you that there is a matter to confirm with the accounting manager immediately. When your senior went out, he said, 'I'm going to the bank for personal needs. I won't be long.' In this case, how would you respond to the sales manager?

【Q2.】 While your senior (manager) was meeting with the executive director on urgent business, the section chief came in and said, 'It's about time to go,' as they were both supposed to attend a celebration party of the client's company. In addition to saying that the manager is talking with the executive director at the moment, what else would you say?

【Q3.】 Your former senior Mr. T (manager) had been transferred. You received a telephone from Mr. Nakamura who was Mr. T's acquaintance and whom you knew by sight. Mr. Nakamura said, 'I'd like to meet Mr. T. Would you mind asking him when it would be convenient?' He didn't seem to know Mr. T had been transferred and his direct junior is now Mr. A (not me). In addition to saying that Mr. T had been transferred, how would you respond to Mr. Nakamura.

【Q4.】 While your senior (manager) was out, Mr. K of the client company phoned you and said, 'I'd like to know the home address of your senior.' He wanted to send a gift to your senior for having received personal assistance. In your company, employees' home addresses are not disclosed to people outside the company as a general rule. In addition to saying that your senior is out, how would you respond to Mr. K?

### **【Post-learning task】**

◆Study the literature on compliance, choose concrete examples and write your opinions.

<How to write>

1. Use a PC. Submit a Word document.

2. Formatting: 40 letters×30 lines

3. Font: MS Mincho, 10.5 point

MS Gothic, etc. can be used if necessary.

4. Margin setting: Normal

5. Number of characters: 350 to 400

\*In business scenarios, when explaining the current situation or summarizing your talk orally, you should complete it in about one minute.

If you put it into writing, about 400 characters should be sufficient.

If the number of characters is specified:

① Don't exceed that number.

② Write more than 80 percent of the specified number (in this case, more than 350 characters).

6. Others:

Read over what you have written to avoid typos and omissions.

If there is anything you don't understand, confirm definitions and meanings by consulting a dictionary, etc.

You will not obtain points if you appear to have deviated from ethical practices such as copying and pasting text from other literature, or copying a friend's work.

Be sure to write down the reference materials.

<Points to note>

Clearly write down the cited parts and clarify the source.

Learn general forms of citing and referencing.

① Book with one author or editor:

Author, title, publisher, year of publication

Eg. Takashi Saito: 'Kotoba no Chikara', Iwanami Shoten, 2004

② Book with more than two authors or editors:

Authors (editors), title, publisher, year of publication

Eg. Kiyoshi Yamashita and others, eds., 'Nihon no Bigaku', Otsuki Shoten, 1998

③ Translated book:

Author, title, translator, publisher, year of publication

Eg. Macbell Arthor, 'Service Strategy', Trans. Kazuko Oyama and Rei Hirai, Saga Publishing, 2013

④ Internet citation:

Website operator, information theme (URL), access date

Eg. Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry, 'Real condition of Assistance for job-hoppers'  
(<http://www.mhlw.go.jp>) 2015.9.15

↑

Complete URL is not necessary

\*Focus on creating an excellent and well-organized document.

