

Work-Life Balance Will Change Japanese Society

-Current Situation and Outlook of Japan's Work-Life Balance -

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Provisional translation by FPCJ
(Foreign Press Center of Japan)

- 1999 Joined Shiseido Co., Ltd., assigned to Nara Branch
- 2000 Won 1st prize in Business Model Competition
- 2004 Won the Nikkei Woman of the Year 2004 Award
- 2005 Resigned Shiseido
- 2006 Started Work-Life Balance Co., Ltd.; gave birth to first baby boy
- 2007 Appointed a member of Work-Life Balance Investigation Board, Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office
- 2008 Developed Work-Life Balance Organizational Diagnosis
- 2009 Began Work-Life Balance Consultant Training Program
- 2011 Launched the website Guide to Juggle Nursing Care and Work; Obtained a National Vocational Qualification of Nursing Care Worker (Second Grade)
- 2012 Launched Morning Mail.com; made a presentation at a public hearing in the Diet; gave birth to second baby boy
- 2013 Developed Yoshie Komuro's WLB Academy to practice the morning and evening mail system; chosen as one of 60 members for the government's Group Meeting on Economy Trend; began to appear regularly on NHK's *News Web*
- 2014 Regular member of METI's Industrial Structure Council
Received Best Mother Award (Economy section)
Member of Prime Minister Abe's Industrial Competitiveness Council
Member of Central Council for Education of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology



Presentation at House of Representatives Cabinet Committee public hearing (November 13, 2014)

Work

Tired from continuous overtime work

Family life
and
private life

Have little time to
play with children,
spend time with a partner,
play sports, or for self-study,
etc.

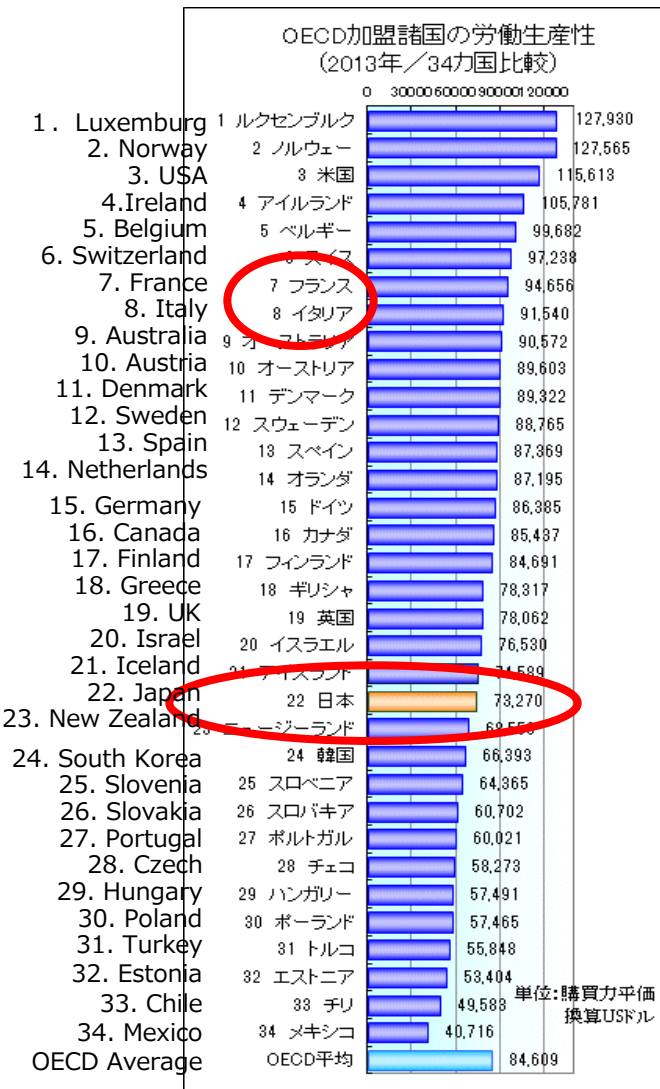
Work-life balance
dissatisfaction ratio

1	日本(16%)	Japan
2	オーストラリア(11%)	Australia
2	ロシア(11%)	Russia
4	カナダ(9%)	Canada
5	ギリシア(8%)	Greece
5	スペイン(8%)	Spain
7	米国(8%)	USA
8	ドイツ(7%)	Germany
9	ポーランド(6%)	Poland
9	中国(6%)	China

Source: 2006 world conscious survey of 14,000 people in 24 countries on work-life balance, conducted by IRIS (International Research Institutes)

Japan's work-life balance satisfaction level is low,
worst among 24 countries → 'all-work-no-play' society

What is the 'outcome' of working long hours?



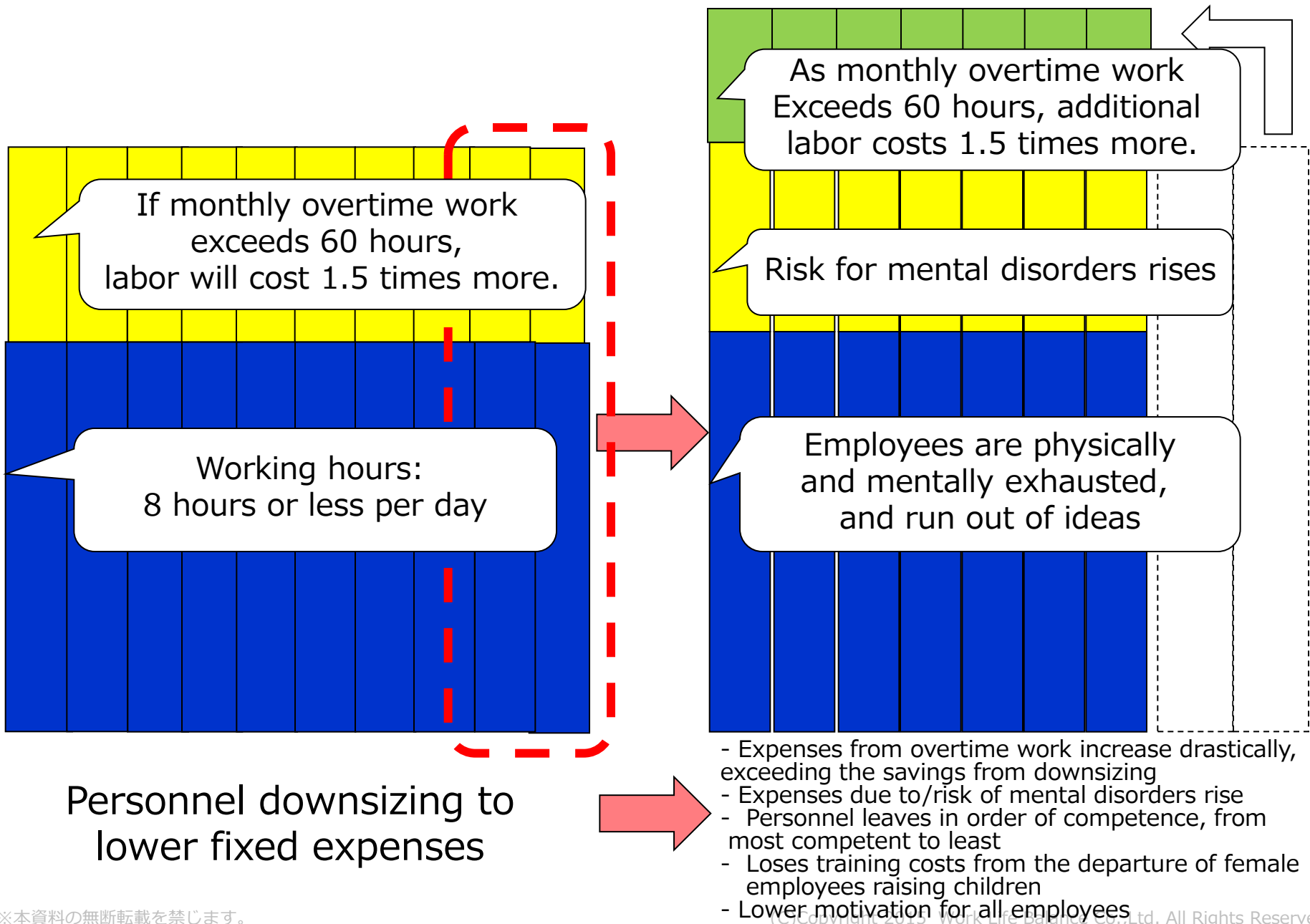
Japan's labor productivity:
22nd among 34 OECD member
countries (2013 comparison)

Labor productivity: added value price (profit) per person,
quantity of output per unit labor power (*)
*Unit labor power: labor power per personnel or per hour

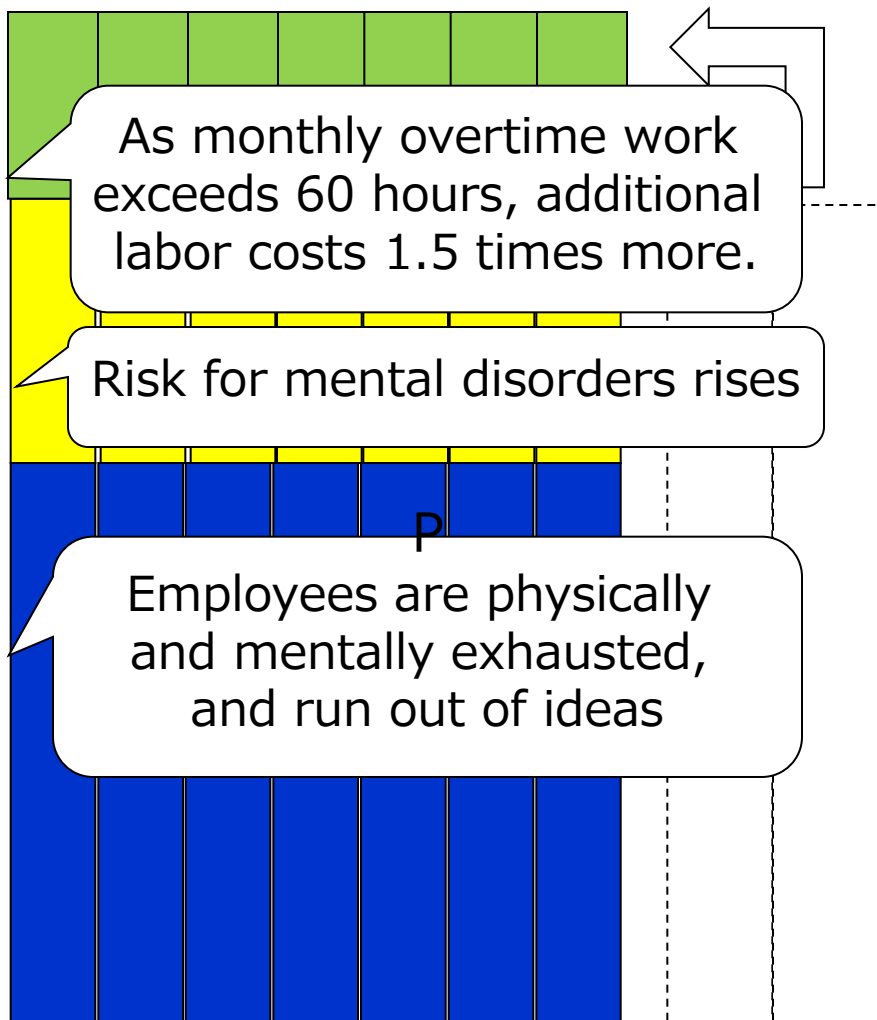
→ Japan has long working
hours, but produces low
added value.

**Japan has some of the world's
longest working hours but low level
of productivity → negative spiral**

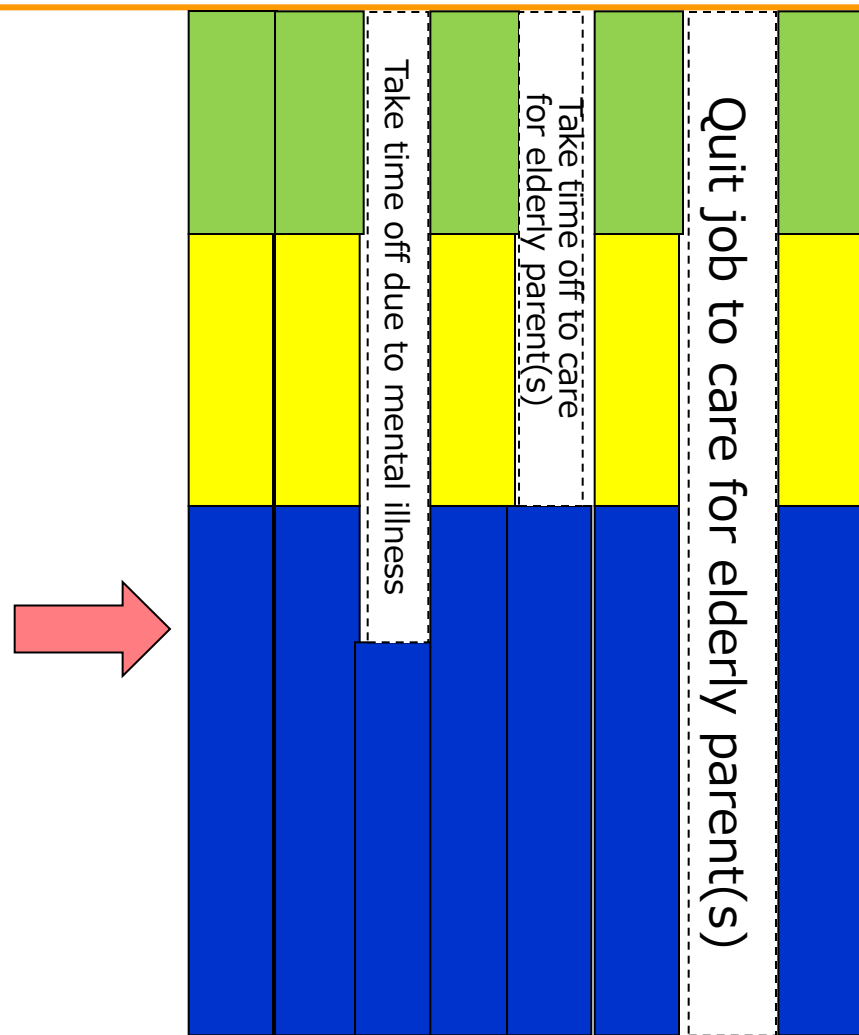
Source: 2014 Labor Productivity International
Comparison (Japan Productivity Center)



Situation has started worsening further



- Expenses from overtime work increase drastically, exceeding the savings from downsizing
- Expenses due to/risk of mental disorders rise
- Personnel leaves in order of competence, from most competent to least
- Lower motivation for all employees



- Unable to handle the same workload with fewer employees
- Unable to hire competent workers due to poor working environment
- Unable to continue operations

If monthly overtime work exceeds 60 hours, labor will cost 1.5 times more.

Working hours:
8 hours or less
per day

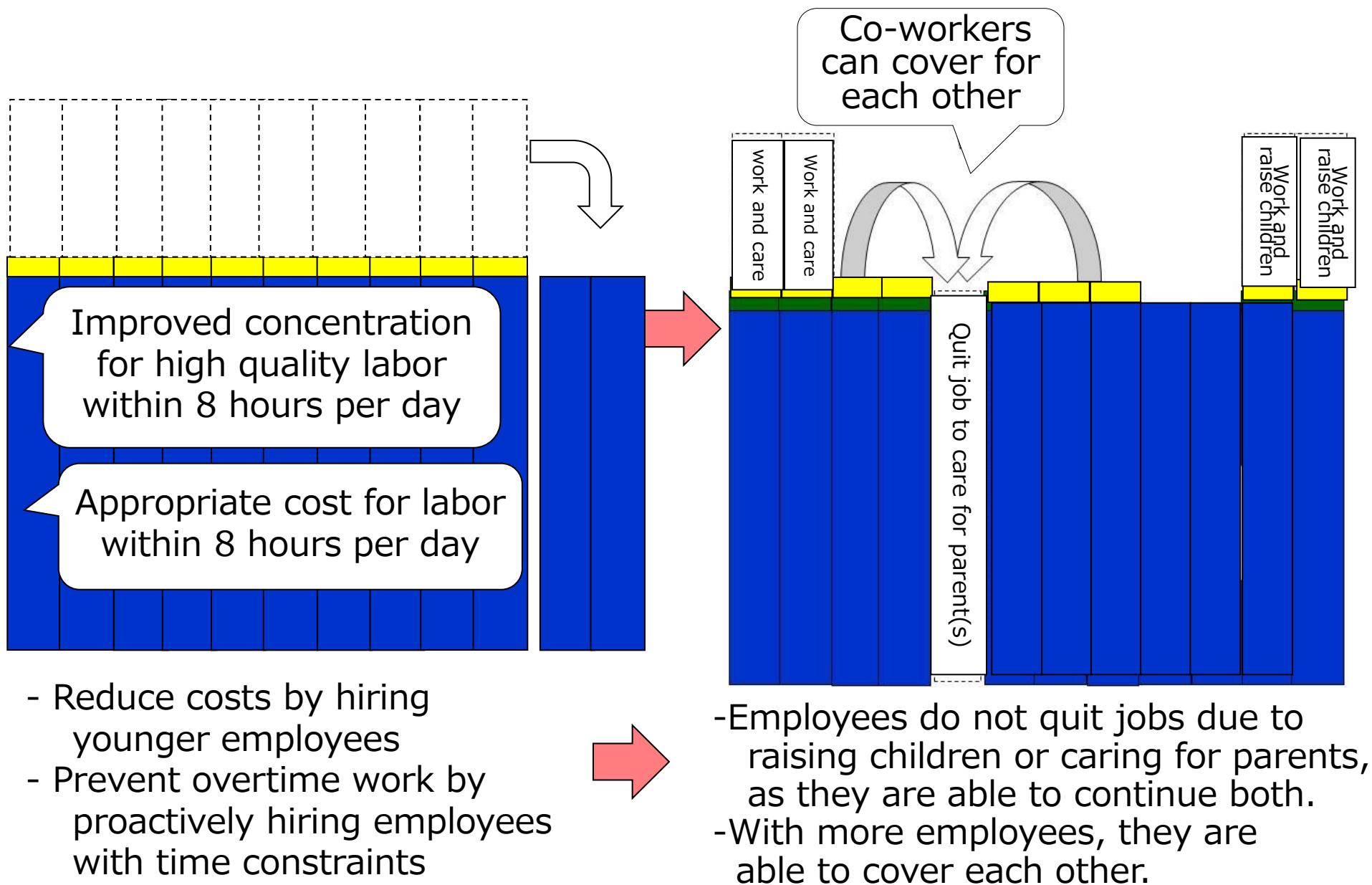
Improved concentration for
high quality labor
within 8 hours per day

Appropriate cost for labor
within 8 hours per day

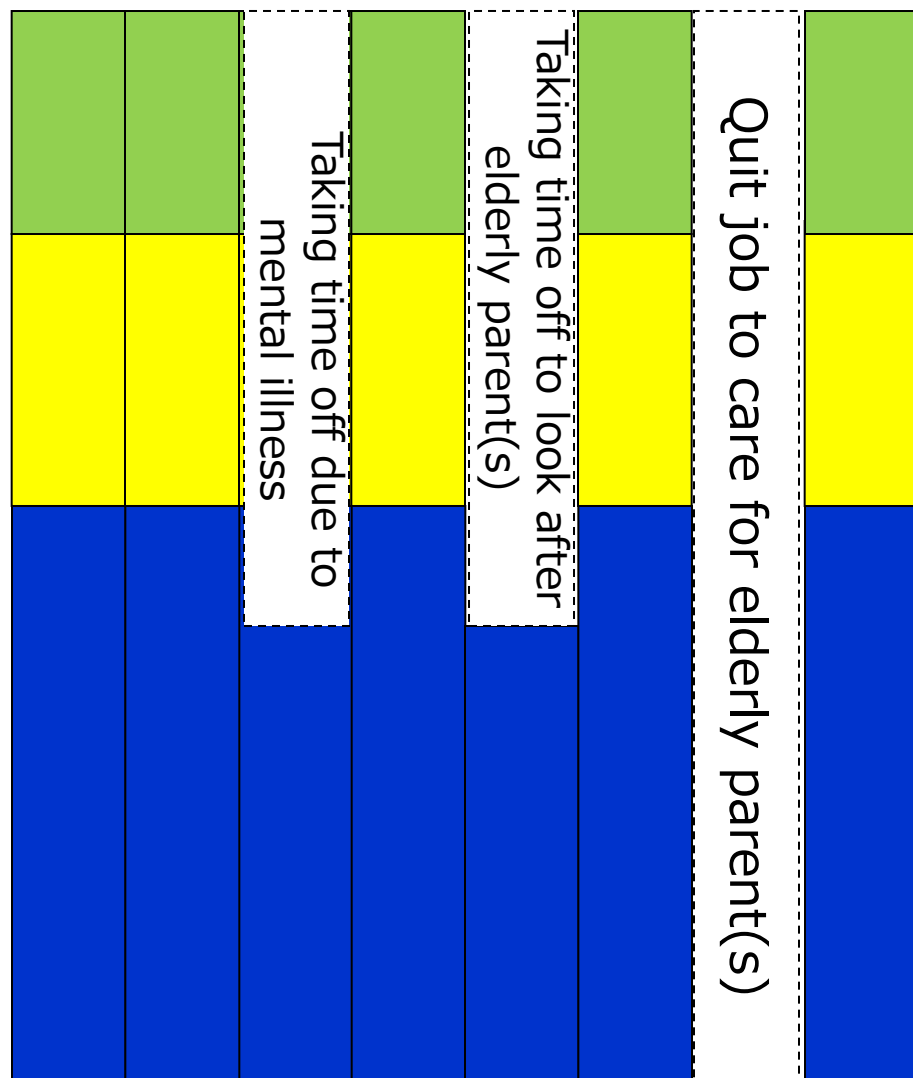
-Reducing working hours per
person of high-cost manpower

-Reduce costs by hiring younger employees
-Prevent overtime work by proactively
hiring employees with time constraints

Competitive strategy capable of responding to serious challenges



Impact on finances (if current working style continues)



Can't care for aged family members due to OT.
Make more 24-hour care facilities!
(intending to leave the elderly at a nursing home at early stages even though they don't need it)

Can't get my child from daycare on time due to OT.
Want more daycares that can take care of children until late at night!
(Lose even more money due to high costs of staff working night shifts)

Can't join PTA or community activities.
Someone else keep the area clean and safe!

Can't spend time with my kids.
Can't staff at daycare services train them properly on my behalf?

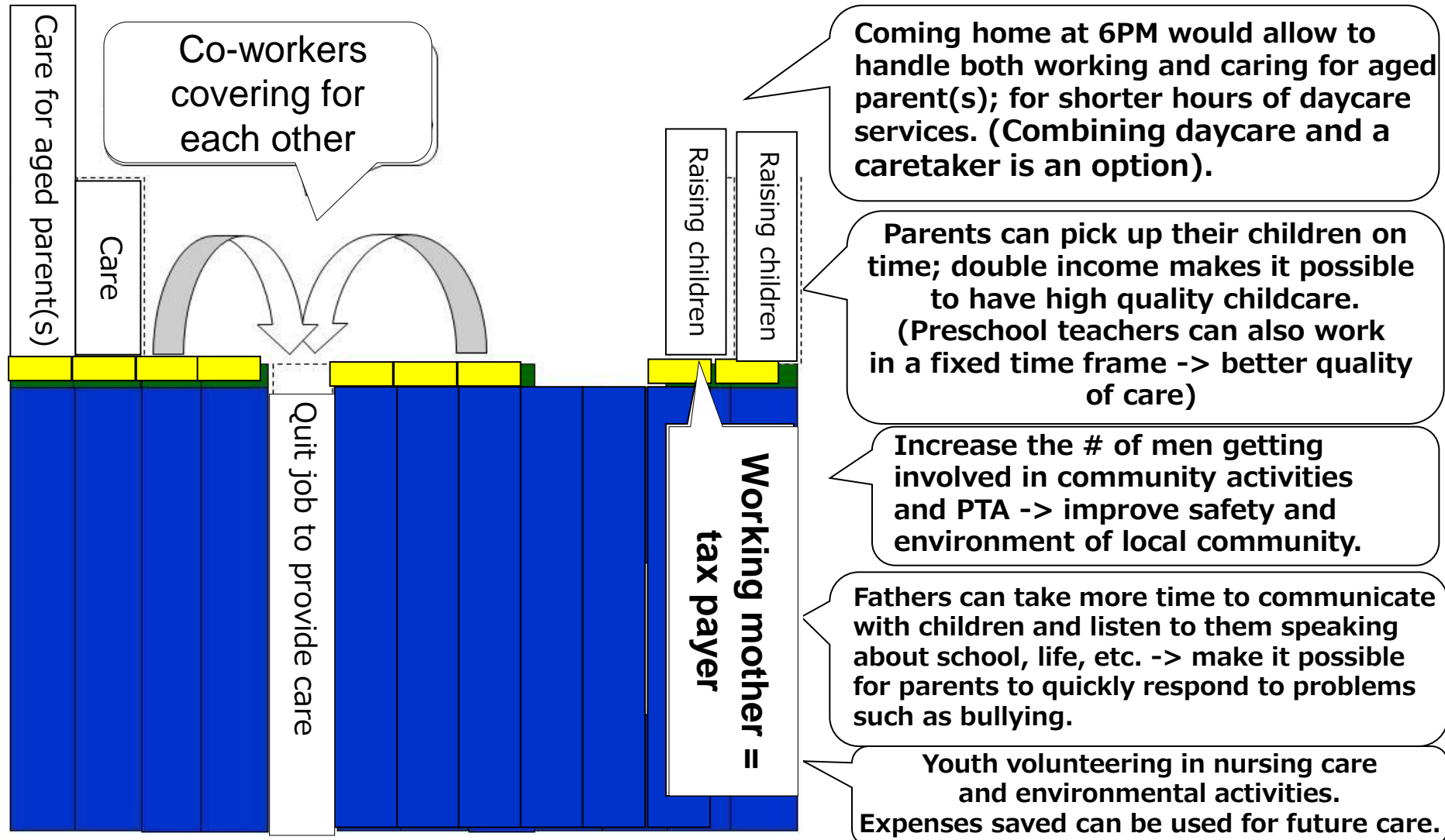
of depressed workers increases due to OT.
More aid is needed for re-employment assistance.

The amount of pension for women is generally less than that of men as more women stay home to raise children. Want government to increase financial aid!

We'd rather avoid hiring new employees as we face financial difficulties.
If the government insists, they should raise the amount of subsidies!

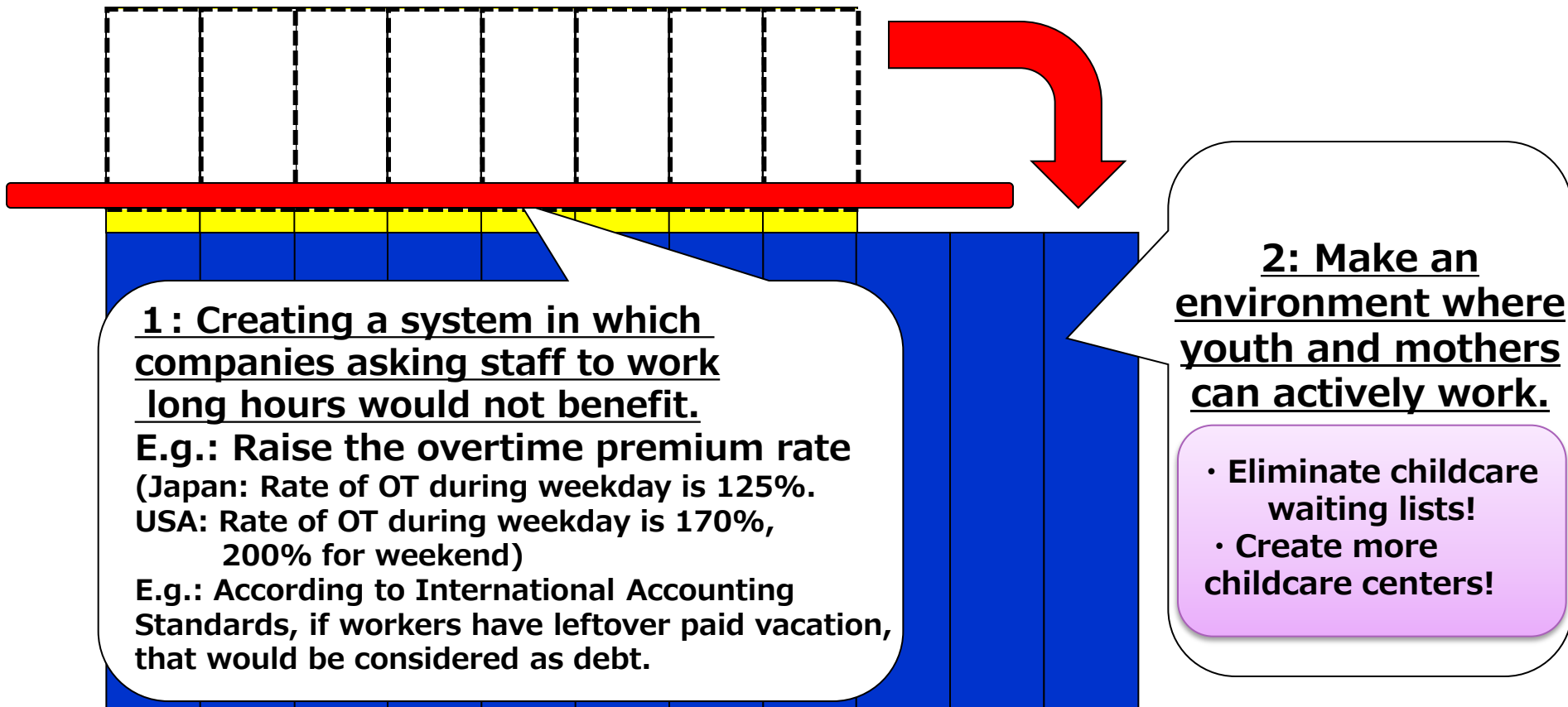
As demands on welfare and aid escalate, more pressure on finances!

Impact on finances (if alternative working style is applied)



Time after work can be used to get actively involved in raising children, exercising for health, caring for elderly parent(s), and improving the community
→ A society in which individuals can handle their problems by themselves

Creating a system to support people



The government of Japan has ignored labor issues for a long time, claiming that they should be dealt with by individual companies, and believing that the economy would grow more without intervention. However, the Revising Japan Revitalization Strategy released on June 30, 2015 stated that “the correction of prolonged working hours will bring a significant impact on economic growth” (page 12 for the English translated version), and made it clear that the government has shifted its direction to handle labor issues not only from a welfare perspective but also as part of Japan’s growth strategy.