

## P&G, IBM most 'woman-friendly'

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The Japanese units of overseas companies topped the list of firms in the country with the best working environment for women, according to a survey conducted by monthly magazine Nikkei Woman released Friday.

Ranked No. 1 in the survey was the Japanese unit of U.S. consumer products group Procter & Gamble, due to its high percentage of women in managerial positions.

IBM Corp.'s Japanese unit ranked second for its eagerness to utilize women in the workplace, including giving training opportunities to female candidates for managerial positions. In the last survey conducted in 2006, P&G was also ranked first, while IBM was ranked third.

"The labor force is expected to continue declining due to the aging society and the retirement of baby boomers," the magazine said in its May edition. "Amid such a situation, companies are more willing to utilize women in their workforce."

In a similar survey conducted in 1988, retailers including Seiyu and Takashimaya topped the list of companies with the best working environment for women.

Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. was ranked third for its effort in promoting a balance of work time and leisure time among its employees.

Nikkei Woman surveyed 416 listed and unlisted companies in Japan in January and February.

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