

2026 Survey of Job-Hunting Students in Greater Tokyo on Company Selection <Detailed Report>

65% of job-hunting students say their ideal work style is a hybrid model; 80% use generative AI

March 12, 2026

Xymax Research Institute

Survey Overview

In Japan, with its low birth rate and aging society, it has become increasingly important and difficult for companies to attract young workers. The first step toward being chosen by young people would be to understand their values and preferences. However, today's job-hunting students, who have witnessed the social changes brought about by the COVID pandemic, might have different behaviors and values than those of previous generations when choosing their employers.

Since 2016, Xymax Research Institute has conducted Office Worker Survey ten times. In 2024, it conducted its first survey of job-hunting students. This report compiles the results of the 2nd survey of job-hunting students, conducted between December 2025 and January 2026. By understanding the behaviors and values of job-hunting students—who could be described as the future workforce—in choosing their employers, we hope to offer insights to companies seeking young talent.

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Survey period | December 26, 2025 – January 6, 2026 |
| Target respondents | <p>Third-year undergraduates and graduate students in Greater Tokyo whose job-hunting status is “Have secured a job and ended job search,” “Currently job hunting,” or “Plan to start job hunting soon.”</p> <p>*Target universities: A total of 39 universities located in Greater Tokyo (Keio University, Sophia University, The University of Tokyo, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Institute of Science Tokyo, University of Tsukuba, Hitotsubashi University, Yokohama National University, Waseda University, and others), as well as graduate schools located in Greater Tokyo</p> |
| Sample size | <p>300 responses collected; 300 respondents after weighting</p> <p>*To ensure consistency in the year-over-year comparison, the data was weighted and aggregated based on the breakdown (two age groups × two job-hunting statuses) from the same survey conducted in 2024. To prevent any extreme weightings, we have consolidated the categories as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two age groups: 23 and under / 24 and older Two job-hunting status categories: “Have secured a job and ended job search” / “Currently job hunting” and “Plan to start job hunting soon” |
| Survey method | Online survey |

Respondent attributes

| | | Post-WB % mix | | | Post-WB % mix |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|---|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Age | 20 | 8.2% | Place of residence | Tokyo | 51.5% |
| | 21 | 20.6% | | Kanagawa | 21.6% |
| | 22 | 33.9% | | Chiba | 11.6% |
| | 23 | 20.5% | | Saitama | 7.1% |
| | 24 | 4.2% | | Ibaraki | 3.2% |
| | 25 | 8.1% | | Tochigi | 2.3% |
| Grade | 26 | 4.5% | Yamanashi | 1.3% | |
| | 3rd-year undergraduate | 28.5% | Gunma | 1.2% | |
| | 4th-year undergraduate or above | 65.8% | Arts or science major | Arts | 73.4% |
| | | | | Science | 0.0% |
| | | | | Other | 26.1% |
| 2nd-year graduate or above (master) | 4.7% | Job-hunting status | Have secured a job and ended job search | 51.9% | |
| 2nd-year graduate or above (doctor) | 1.0% | | Currently job hunting | 0.0% | |
| Gender | Male | | 32.9% | Plan to start job hunting soon | 51.9% |
| | Female | 67.1% | | | |

The percentage mix in the charts contained in this report is rounded to the first decimal place and, therefore, may not add up to 100%.

Main Findings

1. Job-Hunting Students' Tendencies and Values When Choosing a Company (P. 5)

- The top criteria that students consider important when choosing a company are "Salary and benefits" (74.5%) and "Job details" (58.8%).
- When choosing a company, 53.0% of students consider the ability to telework "(somewhat) important", surpassing the 22.9% who consider it "not (very) important."
- The work style that most closely matched students' ideals is "Hybrid work (Combination of coming to the office and teleworking)," chosen by 64.6% of the students.
- 73.0% agree (or somewhat agree) that they find it appealing to work for a company that offers a satellite office or other telework locations for its employees.
- The office criteria that the largest number of students consider "(somewhat) important" is "Located in an area close to home with a short commute (e.g., suburb, residential area)," outweighing those who prioritize "Located in a central office district with convenient access."
- The top work style initiatives that students want their employers to have in place are "Flex-time program" (50.0%), "Work-from-home allowance (e.g., for supplies and utilities)" (35.8%), and a "Four-day workweek" (32.6%).
- The most common concern when choosing a company is "There might be differences in work style flexibility depending on the department or supervisor ('assignment lottery')," at 37.9%. Although there was an overall declining trend compared to the 2024 survey, the percentage of respondents who said, "I might be required to come to the office every day to do work that can be done remotely" (29.1%) increased.
- In terms of attitudes and values toward working, as much as 54.7% say they "value personal life more than work," more than double the percentage who "value work more than personal life" (26.2%).

2. The Impact of Generative AI and Attitudes Toward Work (P. 13–)

- The total percentage of users who are using generative AI on a regular basis (ranging from almost every day to a few times a month) reached 81.7%.
- Job-hunting students who use generative AI frequently tend to place greater importance on telework and satellite offices; they also tend to place importance on more criteria when selecting companies during their job search and seek a variety of work-style initiatives. They also tend to have more concerns when choosing a company.
- The percentage of students who said they believe digital transformation (DX) (e.g., the use of generative AI, the introduction of robots) "will (somewhat) have an impact" on their work and career after starting a job was 72.2%. This percentage tends to be higher among the group with higher generative AI usage frequency.
- 50.8% of students said they are "interested (somewhat)" in engaging in non-desk work in the future.

3. <Data (1)> Characteristics by Gender (P. 22–)

4. <Data (2)> Characteristics by Arts/Science Major (P. 26–)

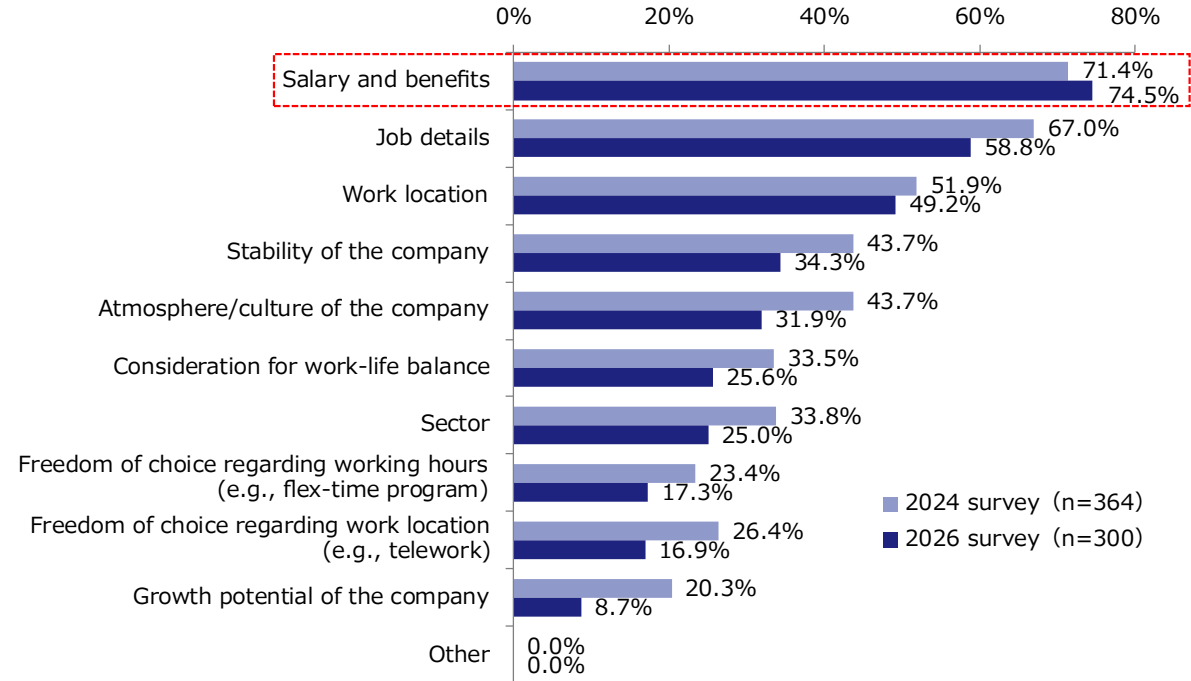
1. Job-Hunting Students' Tendencies and Values When Choosing a Company

In choosing a company, the importance of “Salary and benefits” rose from two years ago

When we asked the students to choose from multiple choices those that they consider important when choosing a company during job hunting, the top criteria were “Salary and benefits” (74.5%) and “Job details” (58.8%) (Figure 1).

Compared to the 2024 survey, “Salary and benefits,” which ranked first, was the only criteria that increased in percentage, while the percentages for other criteria decreased. In recent years, there have been reports of companies raising starting salaries against a backdrop of rising prices and labor shortages. Therefore, it is likely that salary was a major consideration for job-hunting students.

Figure 1: Important Criteria When Choosing a Company During Job Hunting



(All respondents; MA)

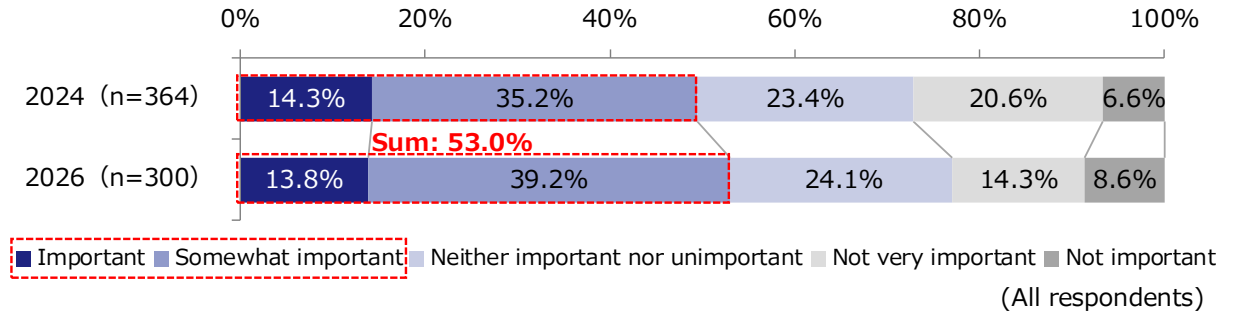
In choosing a company, a majority of job-hunting students prioritize the ability to telework

When choosing a company during job hunting, 53.0% of students consider the ability to telework "important"^{*1}, surpassing the 22.9% who consider it "not important"^{*2} (Figure 2).

*1 Sum of "Important" and "Somewhat important"

*2 Sum of "Not important" and "Not very important"

Figure 2: Importance of Telework When Choosing Future Employers

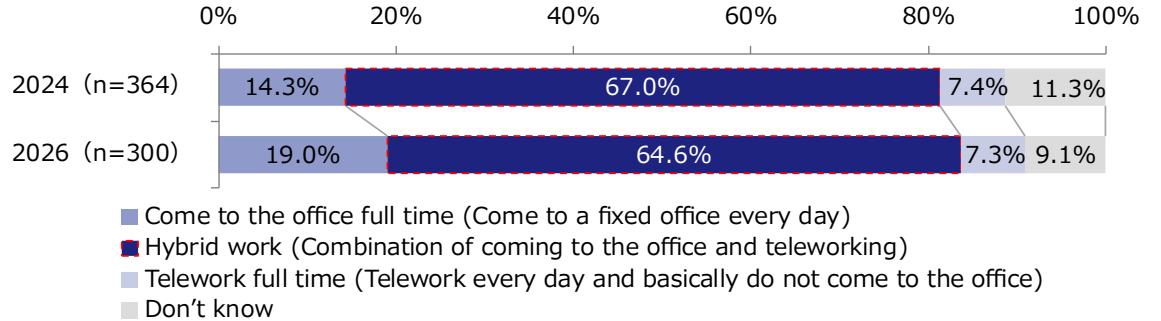


Hybrid work the ideal work style of 64.6% of job-hunting students

When asked which of the three work styles (“Come to the office full time (Come to a fixed office every day),” “Hybrid work (Combination of coming to the office and teleworking)” and “Telework full time (Telework every day and basically do not come to the office)”) was closest to their ideal, the largest percentage of students (64.6%) chose “Hybrid work” (Figure 3).

In contrast, we found that “Come to the office full time” (19.0%) and “Telework full time” (7.3%) were in the minority. However, the percentage who responded “Come to the office full time” increased by 4.7 pps compared to the 2024 survey (14.3%).

Figure 3: Ideal Work Style



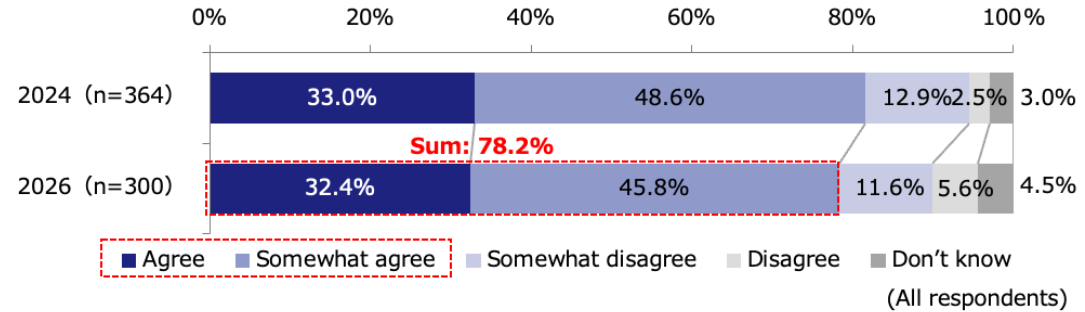
(All respondents)

About 80% find it appealing to work for a company that offers satellite offices, etc.

Upon adopting telework, an increasing number of companies have been signing up for corporate satellite office services, in addition to introducing work-from-home policies.

After explaining telework location services such as satellite offices and shared offices, we asked the students if they would find it appealing to work for a company that offers a satellite office or other telework locations for its employees. 78.2% said they “(somewhat) agree” (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Percentage of Students Who Find It Appealing to Work for a Company That Offers Satellite Offices, etc.



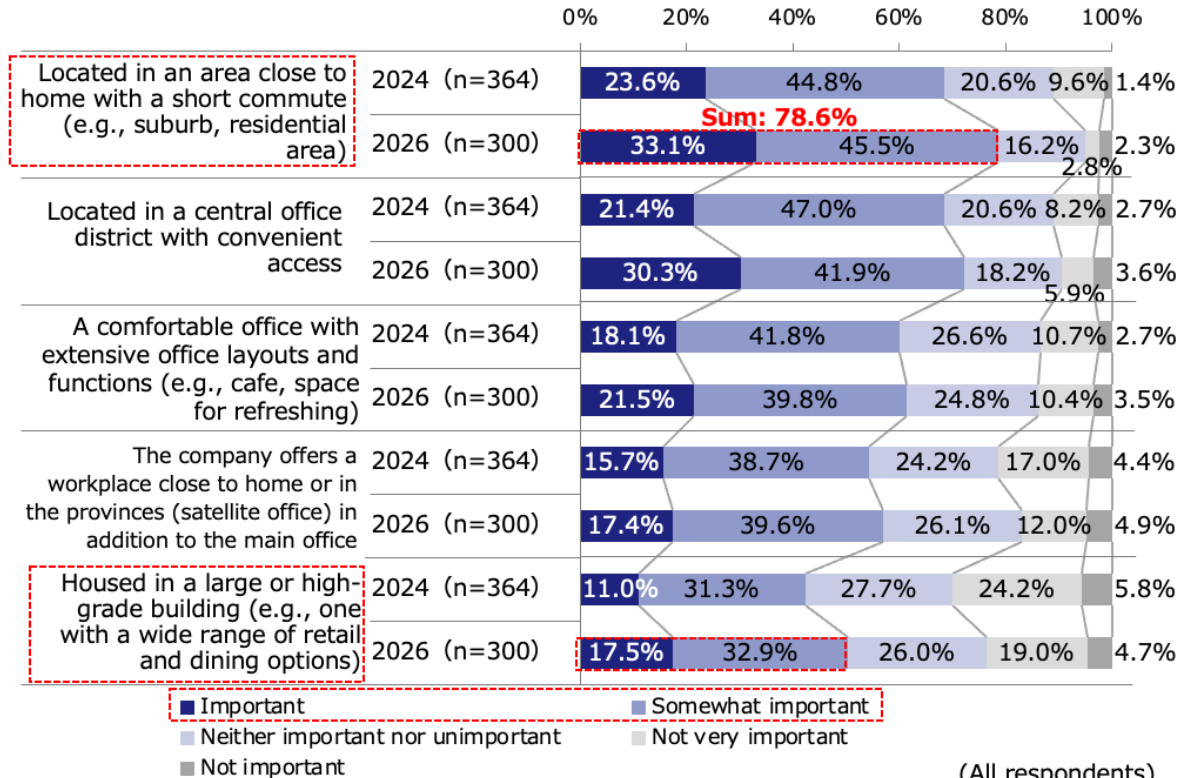
Most important office criteria: “Located in an area close to home with a short commute,” up from 2024 survey

Figure 5 shows the results of how much weight the students place on various office criteria when choosing a company.

The criteria they considered “(somewhat) important” the most was “Located in an area close to home with a short commute (e.g., suburb, residential area)” (78.6%), outweighing those who prioritize “Located in a central office district with convenient access” (72.2%). For young people, who prioritize a time-efficient lifestyle, the aversion to long commutes may be stronger than among previous generations.

Furthermore, compared to the 2024 survey, the following two criteria saw a relatively significant increase in the percentage of students who prioritized them: “Located in an area close to home with a short commute (e.g., suburb, residential area)” and “Housed in a large or high-grade building (e.g., one with a wide range of retail and dining options)” (50.4%).

Figure 5: Important Office Criteria



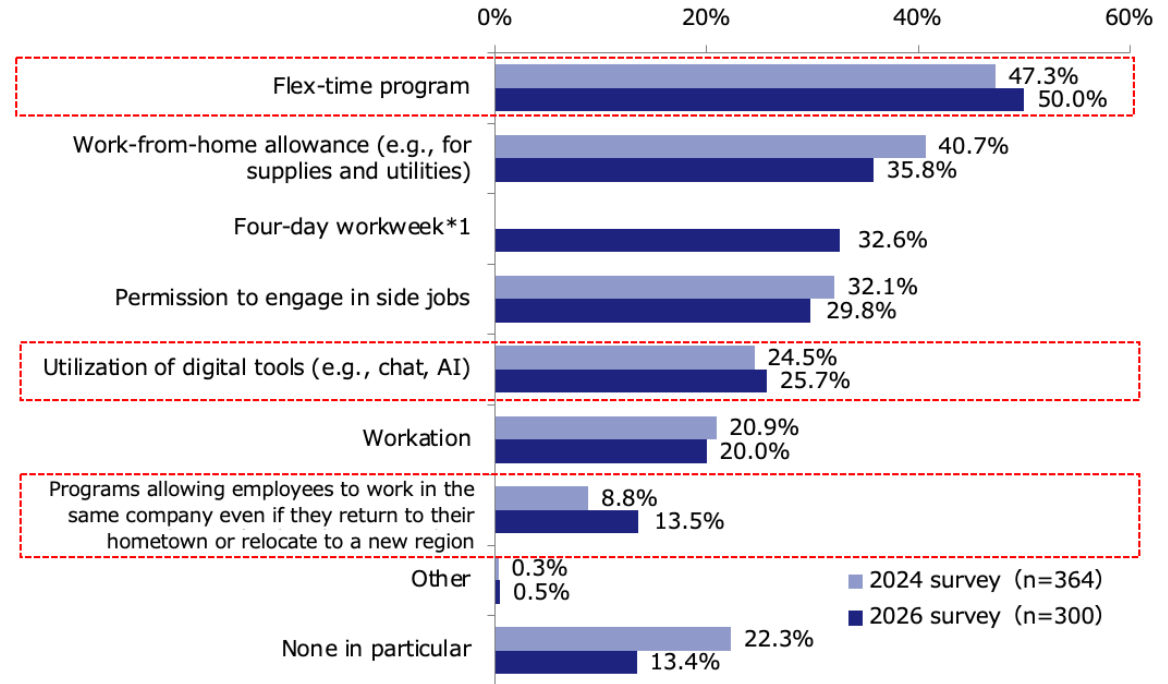
(All respondents)

Work style initiatives in demand: Flex-time program, WFH allowance, four-day workweek

The top work style initiatives that students want their employers to have in place are “Flex-time program” (50.0%), “Work-from-home allowance (e.g., for supplies and utilities)” (35.8%), and a “Four-day workweek” (32.6%) (Figure 6).

In addition, increases in percentage from the 2024 survey were observed not only in “Flex-time program,” but also in “Utilization of digital tools (e.g., chat, AI)” (25.3%) and “Programs allowing employees to work in the same company even if they return to their hometown or relocate to a new region in the future” (12.3%).

Figure 6: Work Style Initiatives Students Want Their Employers to Have in Place



(All respondents; MA)

*1 This choice did not exist in the 2024 survey.

1. Job-Hunting Students' Tendencies and Values When Choosing a Company

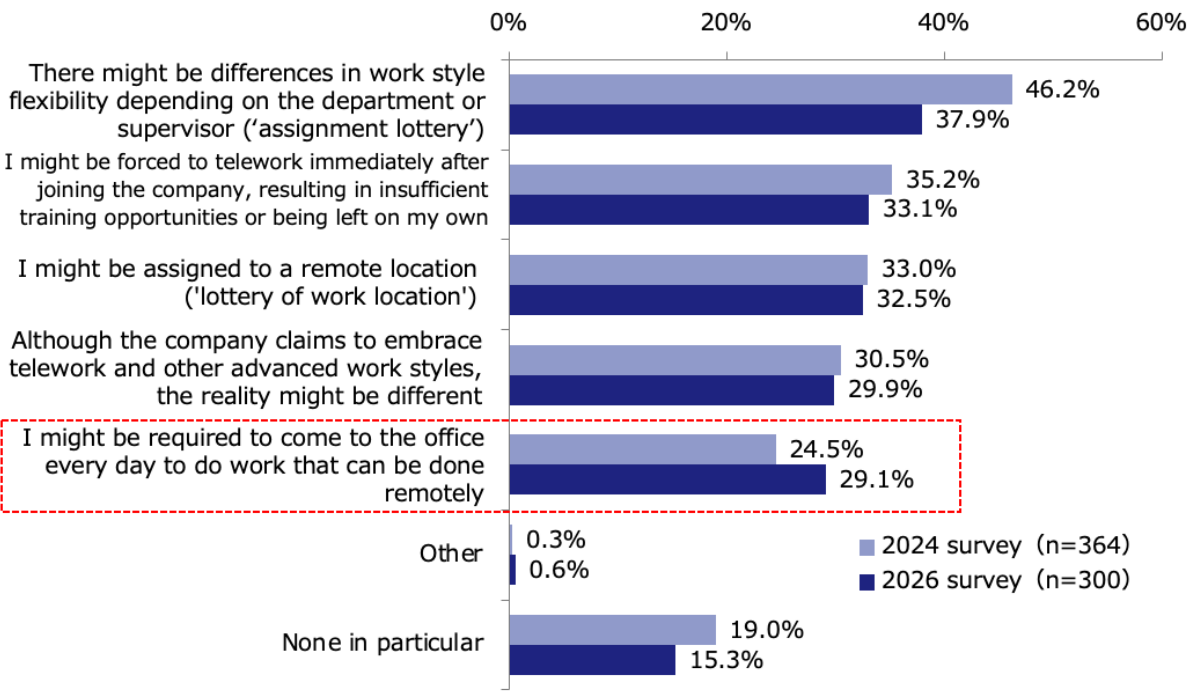
Top concern is “Assignment lottery.” Increase in “I might be required to come to the office every day to do work that can be done remotely.”

Amid the proliferation of teleworking and other new ways of working, the top concern among students regarding company selection was “There might be differences in work style flexibility depending on the department or supervisor (‘assignment lottery’),” cited by 37.9% of students (Figure 7).

However, compared to the 2024 survey, the percentage of respondents citing this concern has dropped, and a general downward trend was observed across other areas of concern as well. As the job market remains favorable for new graduates, anxiety about the job-hunting process itself may have relatively eased. On the other hand, 29.1% of respondents—an increase from the previous survey—cited “I might be required to come to the office every day to do work that can be done remotely.”

These results suggest that, while young people are highly inclined to telework (hybrid work), they are not simply seeking to avoid coming to the office; rather, they desire an environment where they can appropriately switch between working in the office and teleworking depending on the nature of their work and the circumstances.

Figure 7: Concerns When Choosing a Company



(All respondents; MA)

1. Job-Hunting Students' Tendencies and Values When Choosing a Company

More than 50% “prioritize personal life over work” and “want to continue living in the same area”

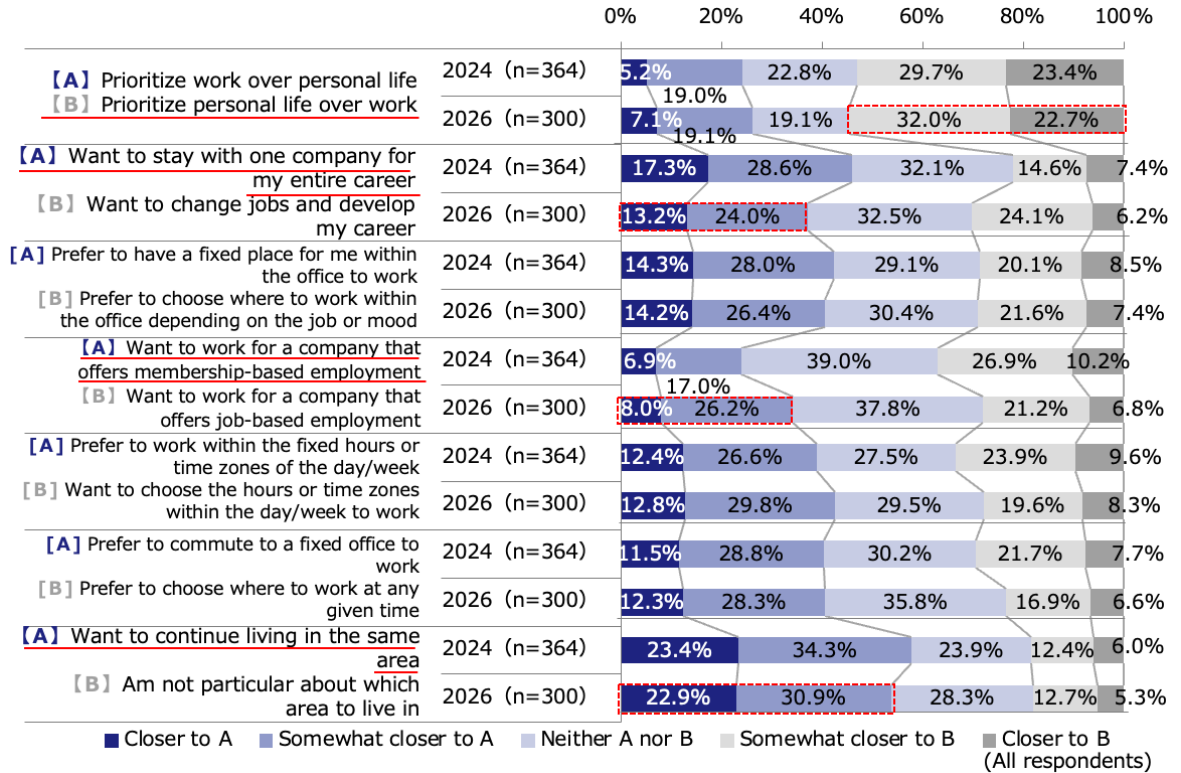
We asked students to rate, on a 5-point scale, which of choices A and B was closer to their attitudes and values toward working. The results are shown in Figure 8. B represents more flexible preferences than A.

The choice that had the highest total percentage of “Closer to B (Rather close to B)” was “Prioritize personal life over work” (54.7%), approximately double the percentage for “Prioritize work over personal life” (26.2%).

Conversely, the highest combined percentage of respondents who selected the more conservative and fixed choice A was for “Want to continue living in the same area” (53.8%), which significantly exceeded the opposing choice, “Am not particular about where I live” (18.0%).

Furthermore, compared to the 2024 survey, there are noticeable shifts in attitudes toward employment, such as a decline in the percentage of students who “want to stay with one company for my entire career” (45.9% → 37.2%) and an increase in those who “want to work for a company that offers membership-based employment” (25.9% → 34.2%).

Figure 8: Attitudes and Values Toward Working

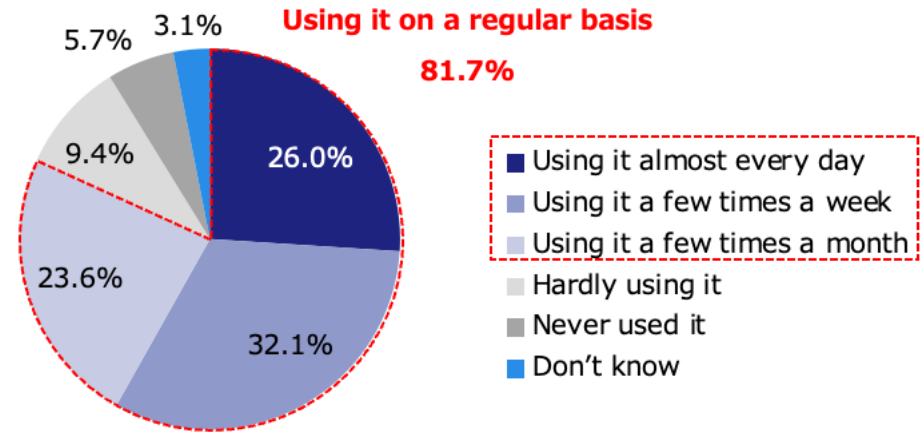


2. Generative AI Usage Frequency and Attitudes Toward Work

More than 80% of job-hunting students use generative AI on a regular basis. 26.0% are “using it almost every day.”

When we asked respondents about their typical use of generative AI, a total of 81.7% indicated that they use it either “almost every day,” “a few times a week,” or “a few times a month” (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Generative AI Usage Frequency



(All respondents (n=300))

Job-hunting students using generative AI frequently prioritize telework and satellite offices more

When comparing the importance placed on telework when choosing an employer, broken down by generative AI usage frequency (Figure 9), the proportion of students who consider it “(somewhat) important” tended to be higher among those who use it frequently compared to those who use it infrequently (Figure 10).

Similarly, when comparing the percentage of students who found working at companies that provide satellite offices or similar facilities appealing, we observed a trend where the group with higher usage frequency tended to have a higher percentage of respondents who answered “(Somewhat) agree” (Figure 11).

These findings suggest that for companies seeking employees with strong digital literacy, such as those skilled in generative AI, it may be important to establish an environment where employees can autonomously choose their work location, including through telework policies.

Figure 10: Importance of Telework When Choosing an Employer – By Generative AI Usage Frequency

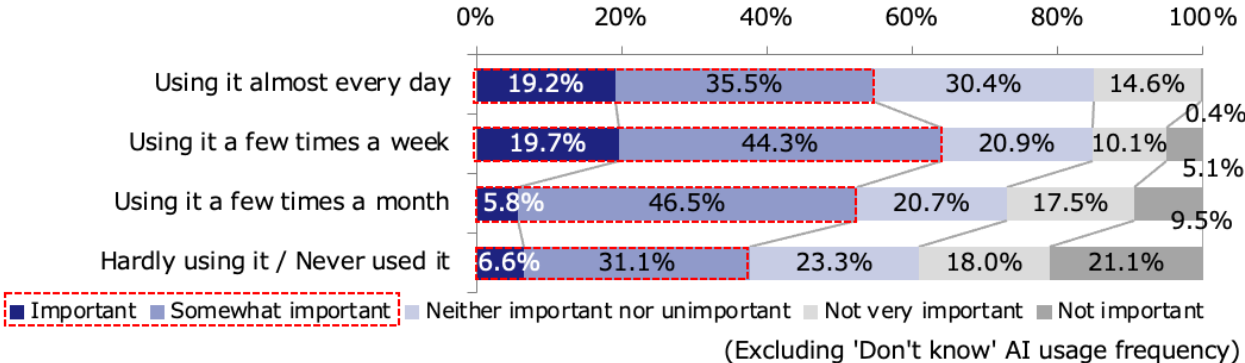
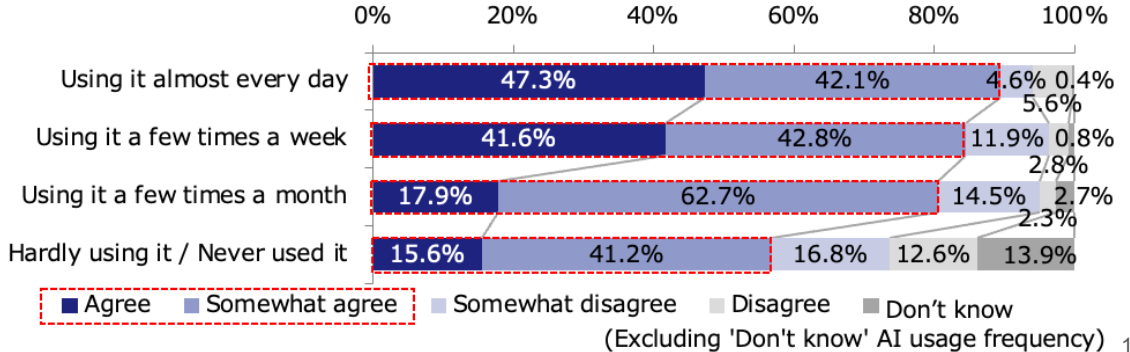


Figure 11: Percentage of Students Who Find It Appealing to Work for a Company That Offers Satellite Offices, etc. – By Generative AI Usage Frequency



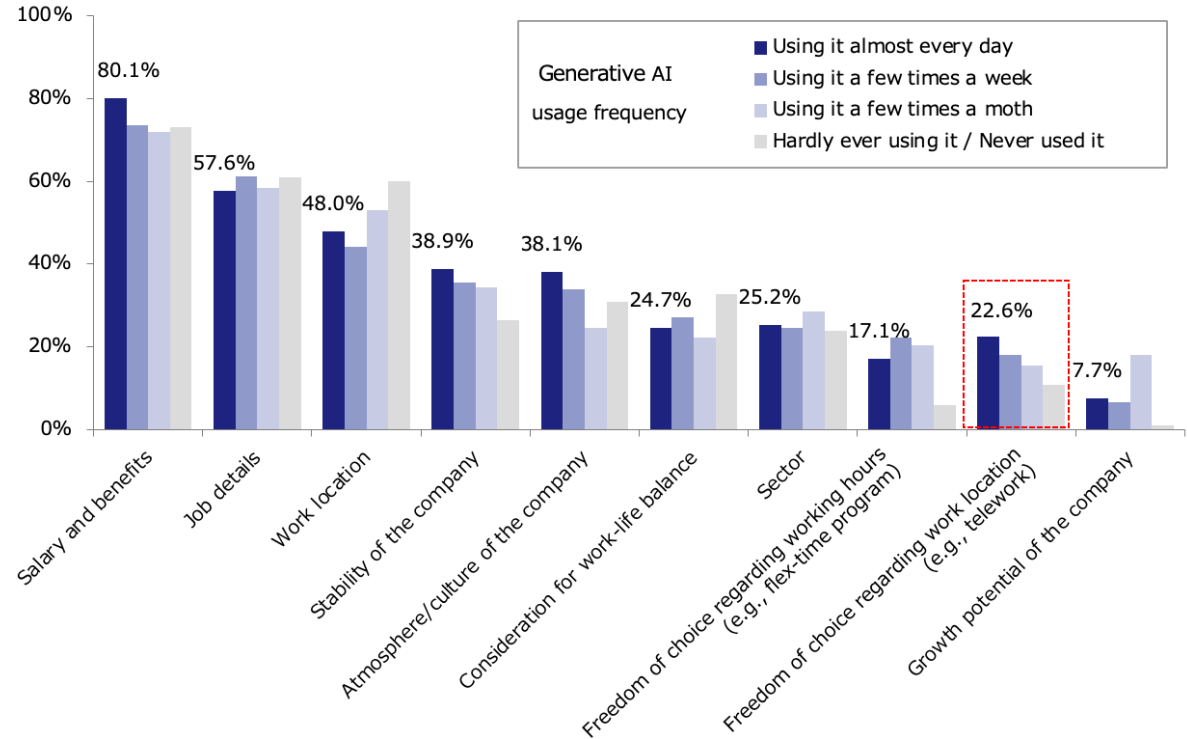
Job-hunting students using generative AI frequently expect more from companies

When comparing the criteria students prioritize when selecting a company, broken down by their generative AI usage frequency (Figure 9), we observed differing trends across each criteria (Figure 12).

Overall, while basic criteria such as “Salary and benefits” and “Job details” account for a high percentage across all groups, there are differences in percentages for certain criteria depending on generative AI usage frequency.

In particular, among the group that are “using it almost every day,” the importance placed on “Freedom of choice regarding work location (e.g., telework)” exceeds that of other groups, in addition to “Salary and benefits.” It appears that job-hunting students who use generative AI on a daily basis are relatively more interested in work conditions, particularly flexibility in work styles.

Figure 12: Important Criteria When Choosing a Company – By Generative AI Usage Frequency

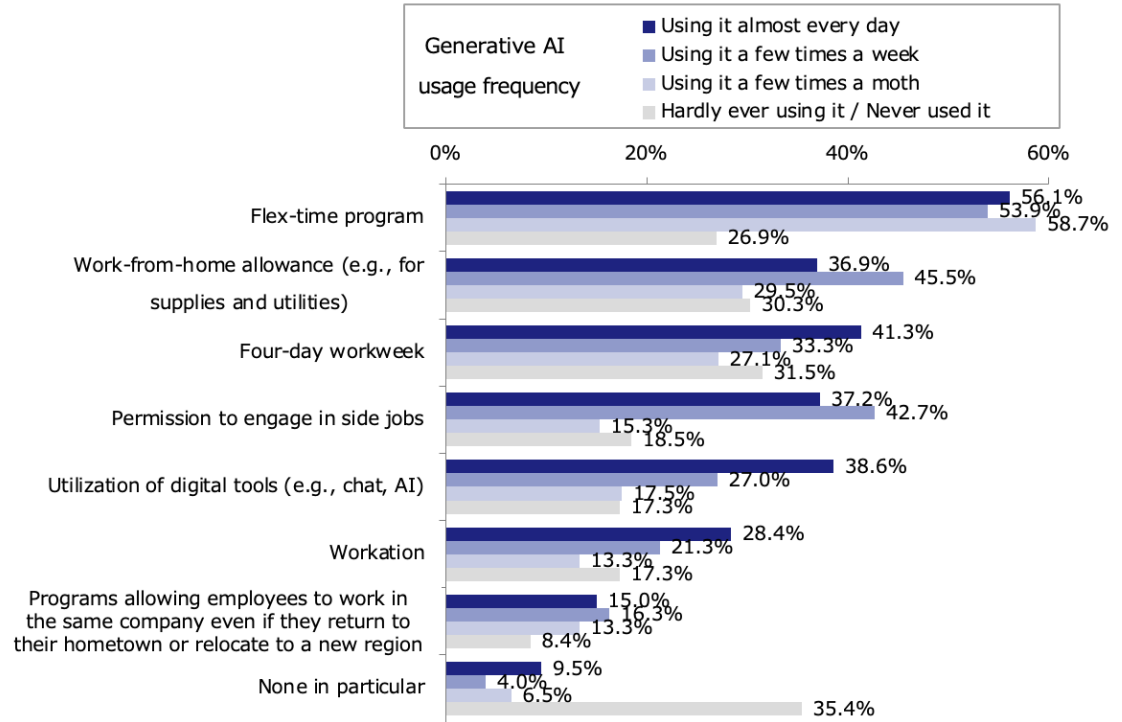


(Excluding 'Don't know' AI usage frequency; MA; excerpt)

Job-hunting students using generative AI frequently seek a wider variety of work style initiatives

When comparing the work style initiatives students would like their future employers to have in place, broken down by generative AI usage frequency (Figure 9), we observed a trend where groups with higher usage frequency tended to seek a wider variety of initiatives (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Work Style Initiatives Students Want Their Employers to Have in Place – By Generative AI Usage Frequency



(Excluding 'Don't know' AI usage frequency; MA; excerpt)

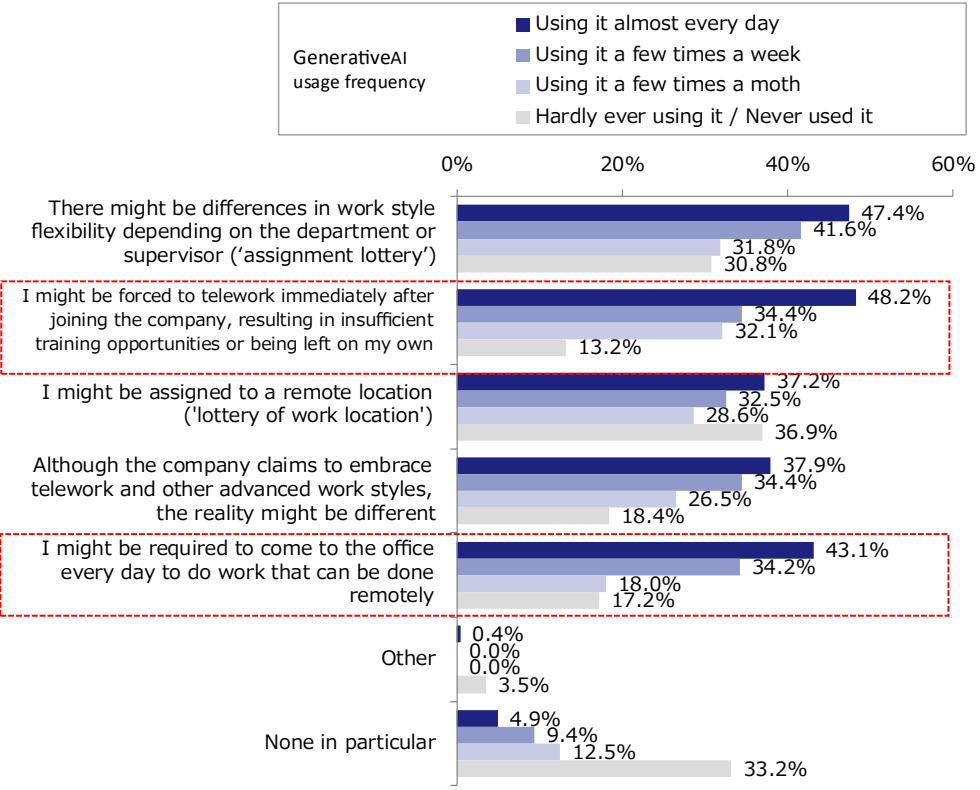
Job-hunting students using generative AI frequently express more concerns, such as being forced to telework and left on one's own

When we compared students' concerns when choosing a company, broken down by their generative AI usage frequency (Figure 9), we found that, across many items, the percentage of respondents tended to be higher among the group with higher usage frequency (Figure 14).

In particular, concerns such as "I might be forced to telework immediately after joining the company, resulting in insufficient training opportunities or being left on my own" and "I might be required to come to the office every day to do work that can be done remotely" showed a relatively strong correlation with generative AI usage frequency. Among those who are "using it almost every day," over 40% expressed each of these concerns.

It is fair to say that those who frequently use generative AI are highly attuned to information and are proactive in gathering information for job hunting. As a result, they have a concrete understanding of how companies' programs actually work, which may make them more prone to feeling anxious. Companies will be expected to go beyond simply stating whether programs exist; they will need to clearly communicate how they are actually implemented and their approach to employee development, in order to alleviate the concerns of job-hunting students.

Figure 14: Concerns When Choosing a Company – By Generative AI Usage Frequency

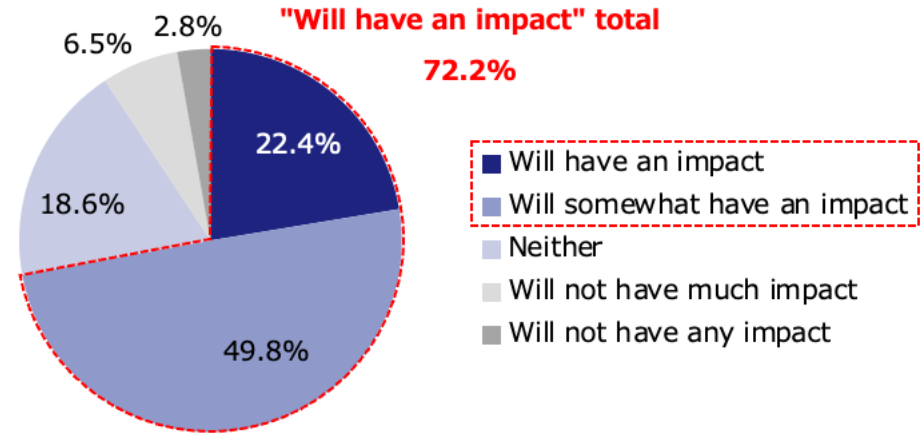


(Excludes 'Don't know' frequency of AI usage; MA)

Impact of DX (e.g., the use of generative AI, introduction of robots) on work and careers: 72.2% believe DX “will have an impact”

When asked whether they believed DX, such as the use of generative AI and the introduction of robots, would affect their work or career after starting a job, 72.2% of students responded that they believed it “will (somewhat) have an impact” (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Impact of DX on One’s Work and Career

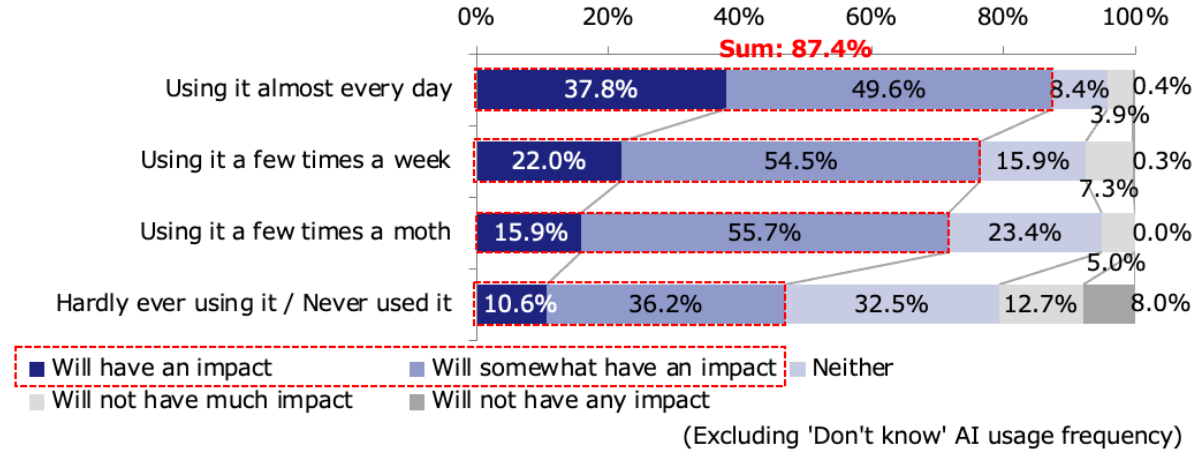


(All respondents (n=300))

Groups that use generative AI frequently feel the impact of DX more strongly

When comparing the results of Figure 15 based on generative AI usage frequency, we observed a trend where groups that use generative AI frequently have a higher proportion of respondents who answered that DX “Will (somewhat) have an impact” on their work and career (Figure 16). The proportion reached 87.4% among those who are “using it almost every day.”

Figure 16: Impact of DX on One’s Work and Career – By Generative AI Usage Frequency



About 50% are interested in engaging in non-desk work in the future

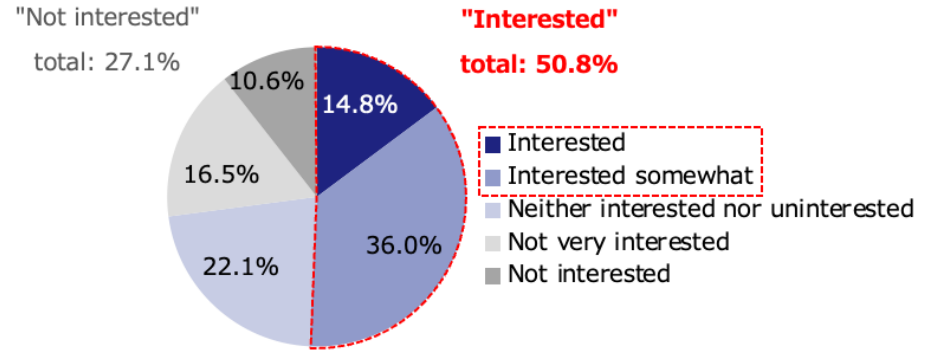
In light of recent social trends, when asked whether they would be interested in engaging in non-desk work* in the future, 50.8% of students answered that they were “interested (somewhat)” (Figure 17).

Although we did not ask in this survey about the students’ preferred industries or job types, given Japanese employment practices, it is reasonable to assume that many of the undergraduate and graduate students surveyed are conducting their job searches with the expectation of securing desk work positions. In that sense, it is worth noting that a majority of students have expressed interest in non-desk work as well.

In a similar question of a survey of office workers nationwide,** the proportion of respondents who answered that they were “interested (somewhat)” was 35.3%, lower than the percentage among job-hunting students.

**[Metropolitan Areas Office Worker Survey 2025](#), published on November 21, 2025

Figure 17: Level of Interest in Engaging in Non-Desk Work in the Future



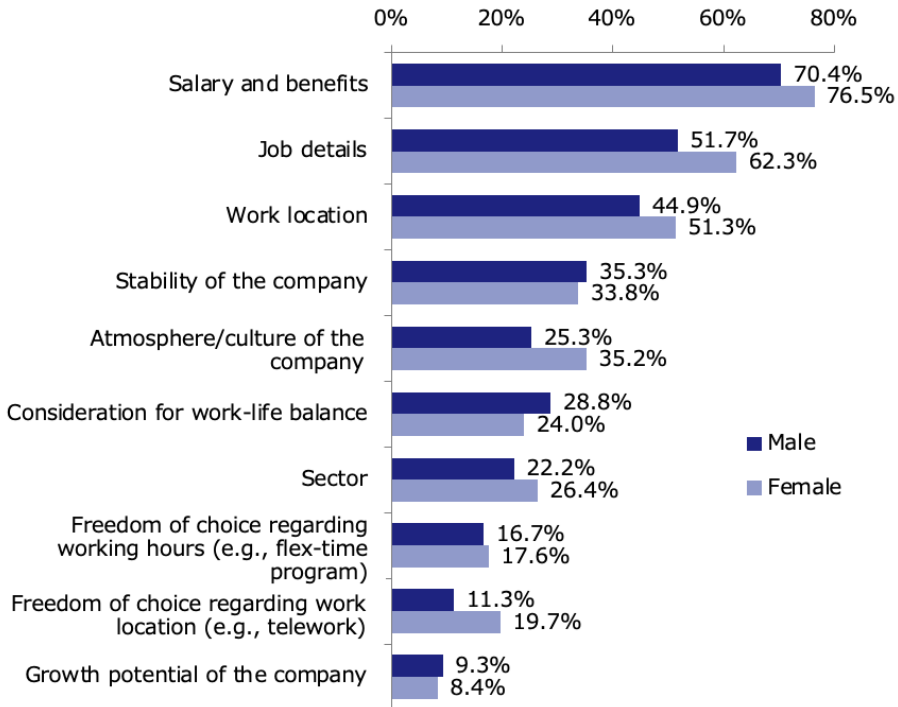
Full text of question: An increasing number of people are working past the age of 60 due to a decline in the labor force and an increase in healthy life expectancy. In particular, non-desk work* is facing a severe labor shortage compared to desk work, which is becoming more efficient due to AI, and is expected to see an increase in demand for labor. A rise in demand is expected to improve wages, and in the United States, there has been a reversal in wages between some non-desk work and desk work. Given these social situations, are you interested in doing non-desk work in the future? Please select the one that most applies to you.

*Non-desk work: Refers to occupations primarily performed in on-site or face-to-face settings. They include a wide range of occupations in sectors that support everyday life and society, such as healthcare/nursing care, childcare, facility management, logistics, sales, service, security, cleaning, and construction. They are characterized by the ease of acquiring specialized skills through practical on-site experience, which can be developed into long-term, marketable expertise.

3. <Data (1)> Characteristics by Gender

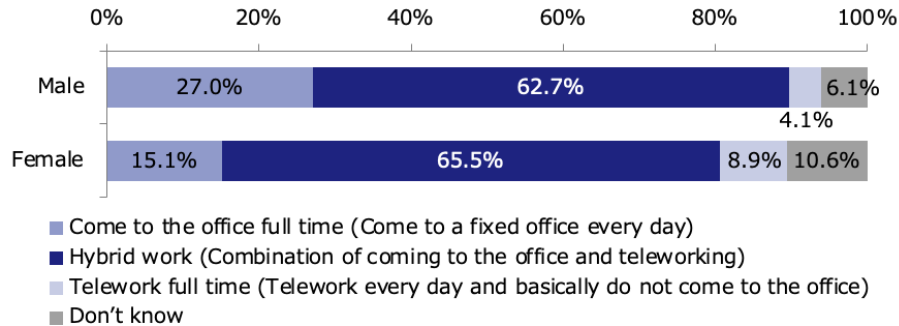
More women (over 80%) than men find it appealing to work for a company with a satellite office (Figure 20)

Figure 18: Important Criteria When Choosing a Company – By Gender



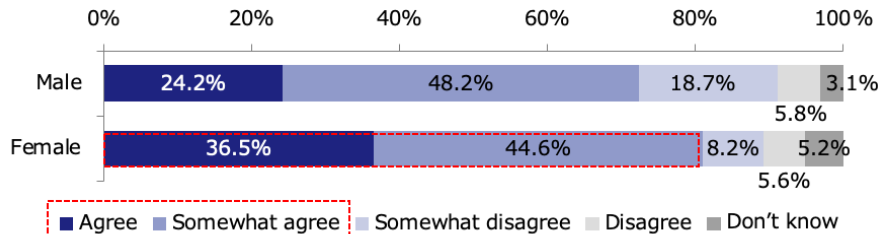
(All respondents; MA; excerpt)

Figure 19: Ideal Work Style – By Gender



(All respondents)

Figure 20: Percentage of Students Who Find It Appealing to Work for a Company That Offers Satellite Offices, etc. – By Gender



(All respondents)

Women seek more initiatives, with particularly high demand for “Flex-time program” (Figure 22)

Figure 21: Important Office Criteria – By Gender

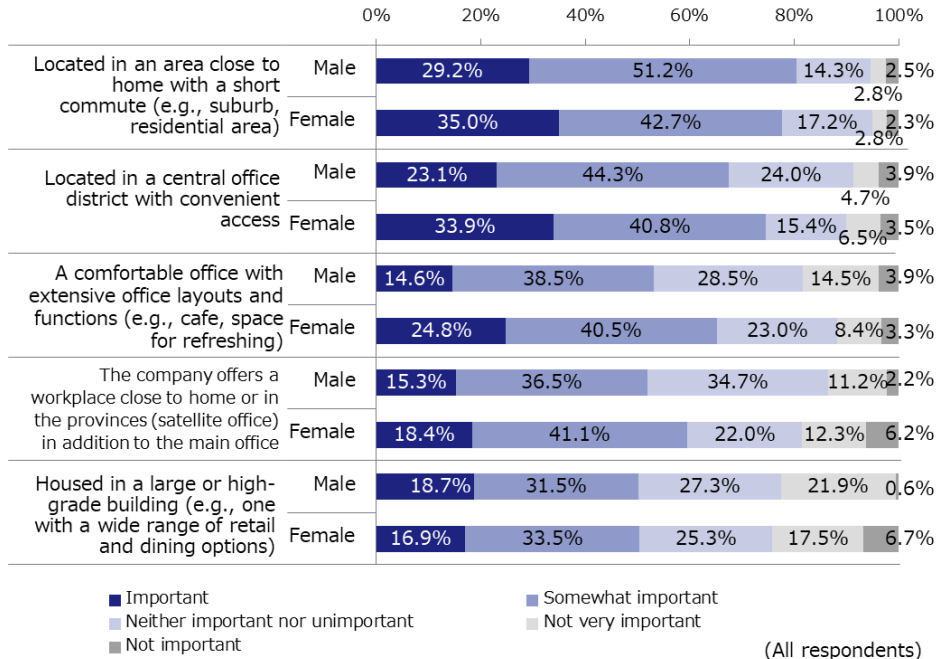
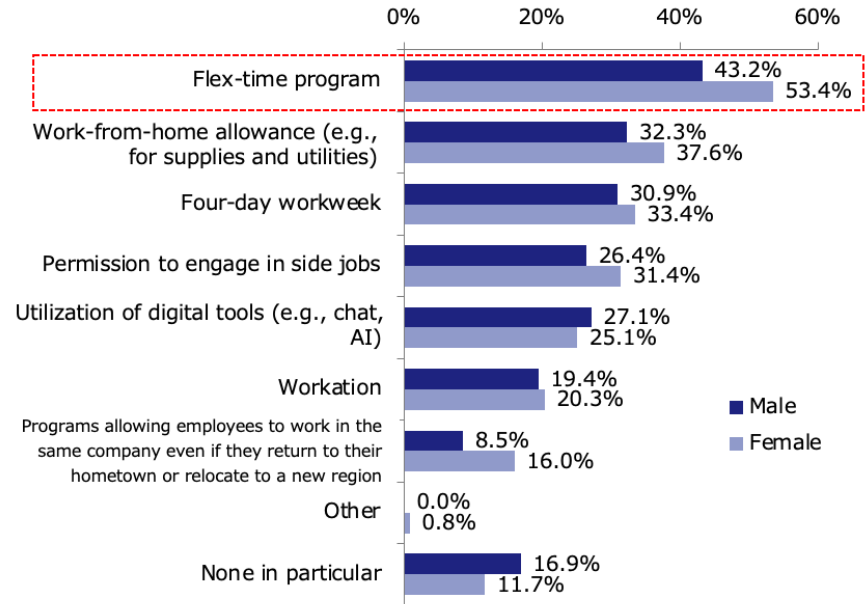


Figure 22: Work Style Initiatives Students Want Their Employers to Have in Place – By Gender



(All respondents; MA)

Women have more concerns, especially over “Assignment lottery” and “Being forced to telework and left on my own” (Figure 23)

Figure 23: Concerns When Choosing a Company – By Gender

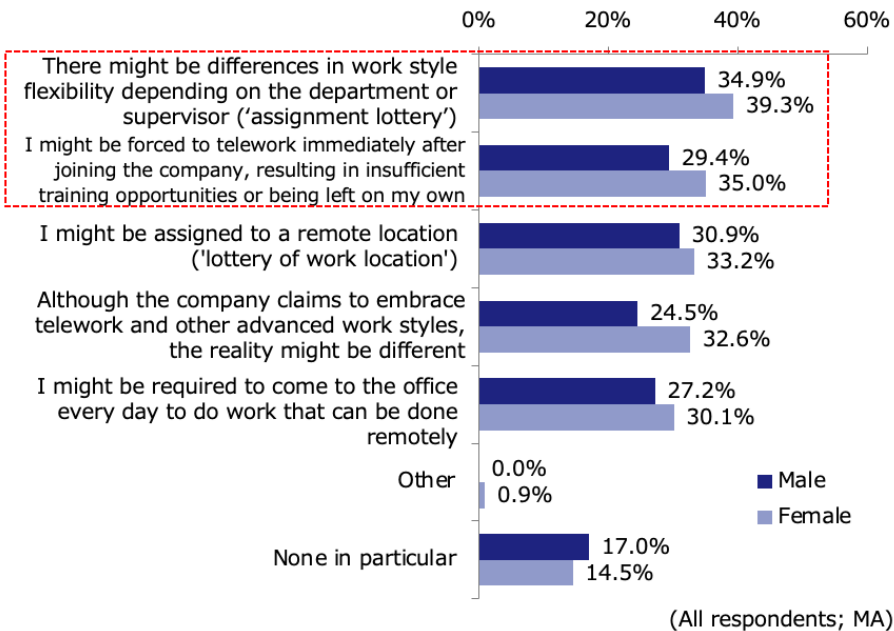
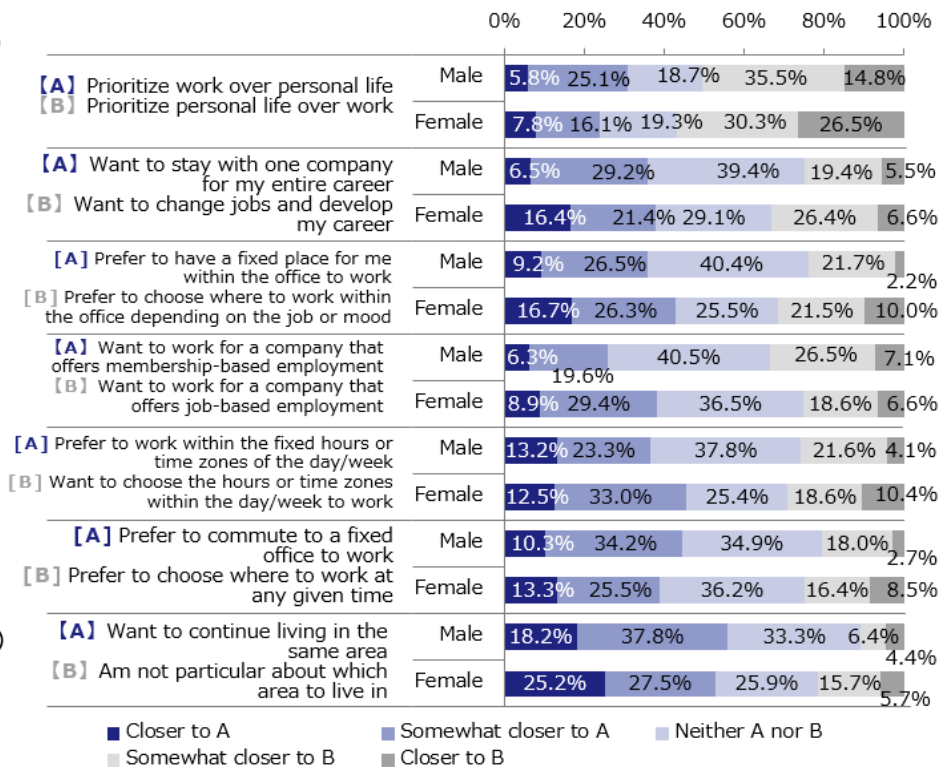


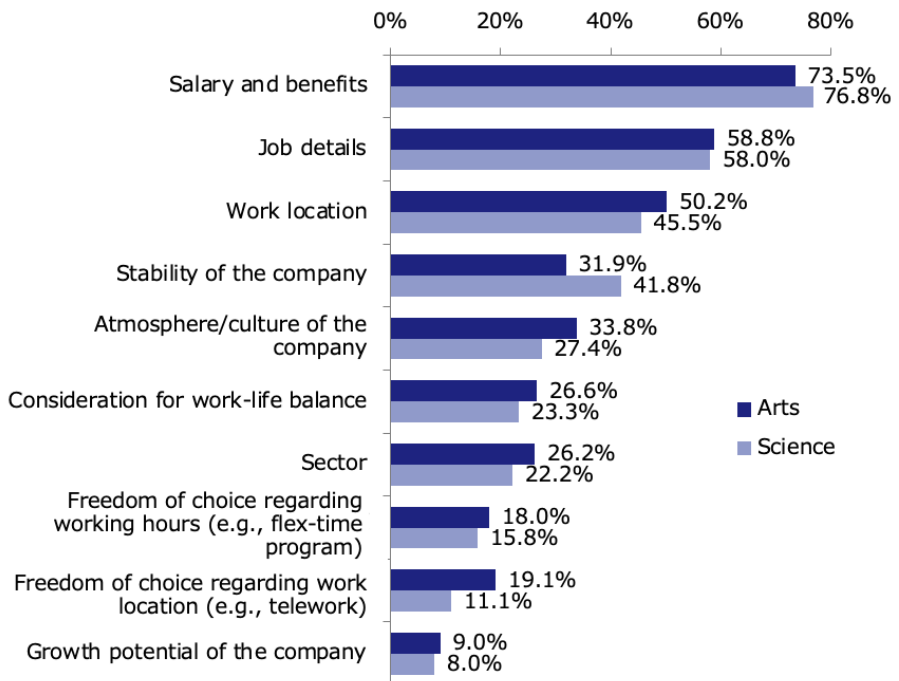
Figure 24: Attitudes and Values Toward Working – By Gender



4. <Data (2)> Characteristics by Arts/Science Major

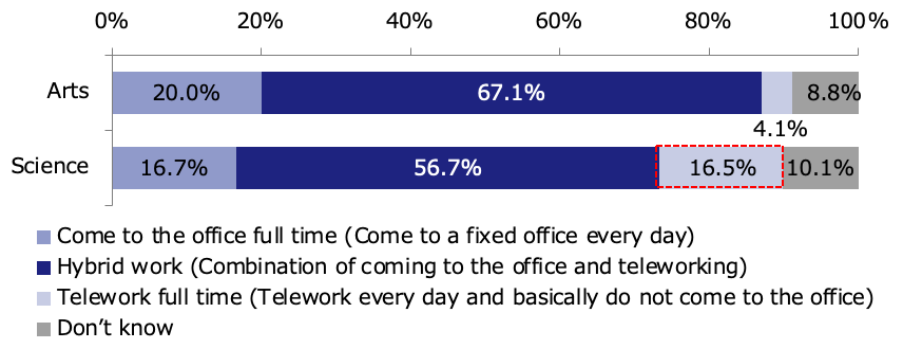
Science students are more interested in full-time telework and satellite offices (Figures 26 & 27)

Figure 25: Important Criteria When Choosing a Company – By Arts/Science Major



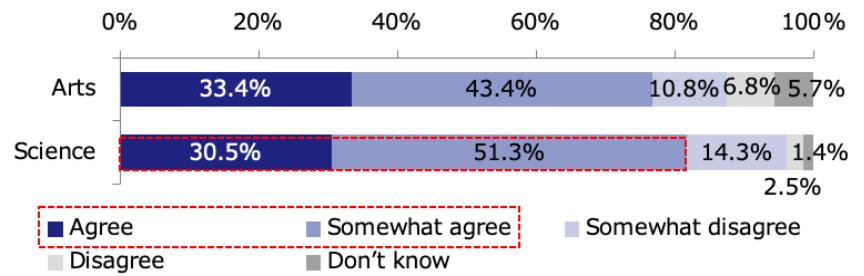
(Excluding 'Other' in arts or science major; MA; excerpt)

Figure 26: Ideal Work Style – By Arts/Science Major



(Excluding 'Other' in arts or science major)

Figure 27: Percentage of Students Who Find It Appealing to Work for a Company That Offers Satellite Offices, etc. – By Arts/Science Major



(Excluding 'Other' in arts or science major)

Arts students have stronger demand for “Utilization of digital tools” and “Permission to engage in side jobs” (Figure 29)

Figure 28: Important Office Criteria – By Arts/Science Major

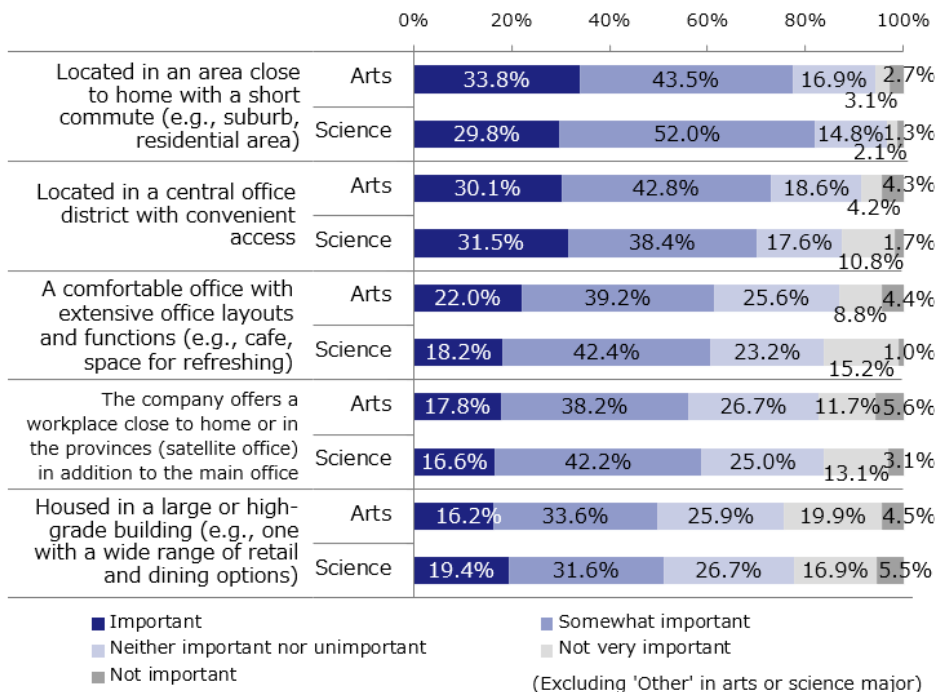
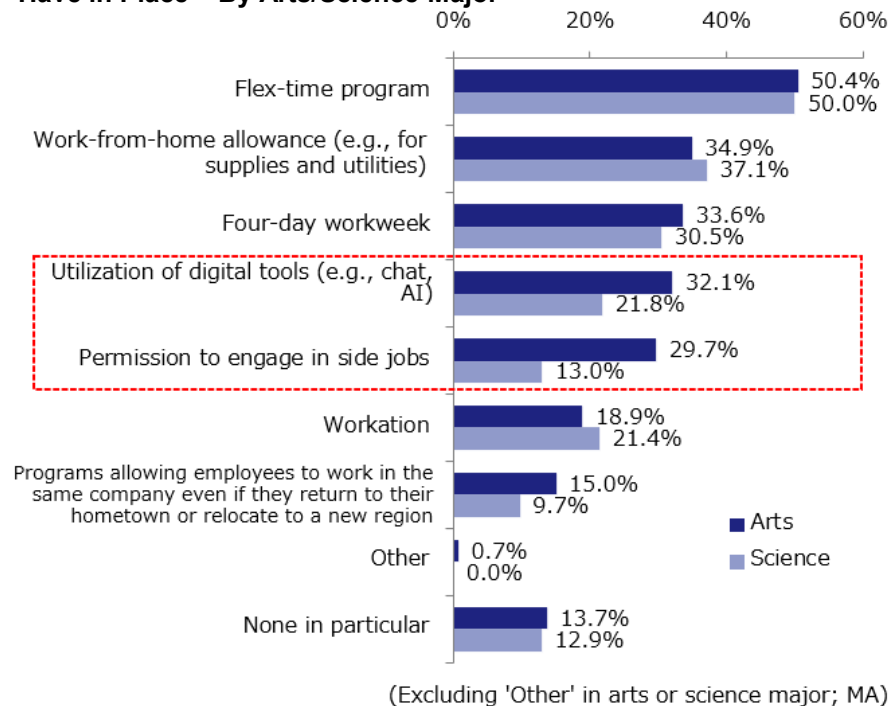
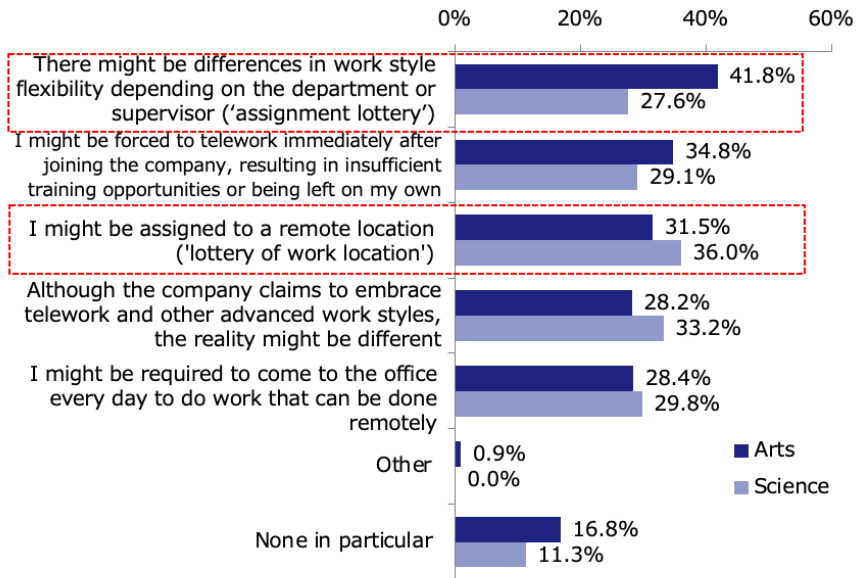


Figure 29: Work Style Initiatives Students Want Their Employers to Have in Place – By Arts/Science Major



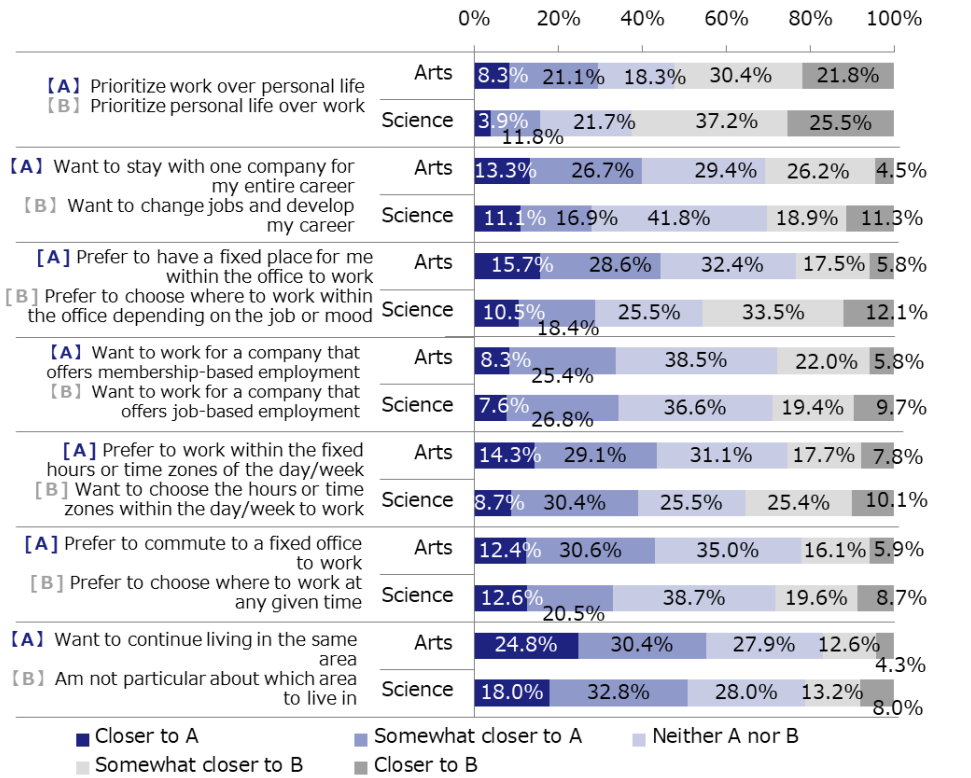
Arts students are concerned over “assignment lottery,” while science students worry about “work location lottery” (Figure 30)

Figure 30: Concerns When Choosing a Company – By Arts/Science Major



(Excluding 'Other' in arts or science major; MA)

Figure 31: Attitudes and Values Toward Working – By Arts/Science Major



(Excluding 'Other' in arts or science major)