

October 2013, Talk Show #24

Guests:

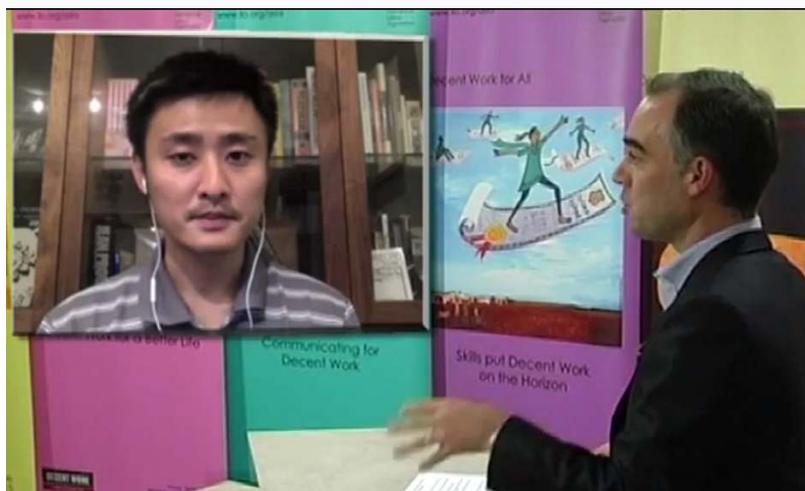
**Mr Takashi Fujimoto**, Found-  
er of Street Academy

Host:

**Mr Matthieu Cognac**, ILO  
Youth Employment Specialist

Camera, sound, editing:

**Mr Julian Hadden**



*You can watch the video of the show at: <http://www.apyouthnet.ilo.org/podcast>*

### **Question 1: Can you explain what Street Academy is all about?**

Street Academy was launched in August 2012 by Mr Fujimoto. It is an internet based service which allows anyone to propose and manage any kind of teaching event by proposing a topic to others and then soliciting interest from people who wish to be their student in that subject.

### **Question 2: Is Street Academy relevant to those who already have formal education?**

It is relevant to everybody, even if an individual has received formal education and would like to enhance a skill. For example, this may be done so that they can expand their career prospects, or purely for pleasure. Either way, it is applicable to those who have graduated and would like to cherry-pick skills and knowledge from peers.

### **Question 3: In Japan, a challenge exists whereby young people typically aim to be employed in the country's largest, blue-chip employers, or they job-hop a lot and become known as 'fritters'. Are Street Academy's attendees interested in their careers or entrepreneurship?**

Both, according to Mr Fujimoto. People who work at such companies as Sony and Toyota can be dissatisfied. Although they receive a good salary and recognition, they can be unhappy for corporate culture. In turn they may come to Street Academy and wish to create the next big app, for example. On the other hand, there are indeed young people who at first cannot join prestigious organisations. Therefore, they aim to improve their skills to enable them to be employable freelancers.

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**Question 4: Do you see the social side of Street Academy, and how it can be part of the solution to Japanese youth unemployment?**

If there is enough scale, Street Academy can offer its services at a low cost. That can make Street Academy an affordable solution to social challenges. To firstly achieve that though, Street Academy still needs to grow in scale.

**Question 5: Tell us about your own experiences as a young entrepreneur in Japan.**

Now is a better time than ever to be an entrepreneur in Japan. Start-up costs are lower today than 5-10 years ago. Resource costs, such as offices and IT, can be rented by the hour as opposed to buying in bulk. There are many meet-up events which help you to build your network. This is making entrepreneurship easier. Never the less, it remains difficult and there is still a culture of offering condolences before the results are even known.

**Question 6: Do you have a key message for young people, as well as the government, workers' organisations, and employers' organisations?**

Mr Fujimoto implored people to view the internet as a means to connect with others. Many remain cautious on the negative side of the internet, particularly with regards to copyright issues. But, people should acknowledge how the internet can be an empowering and liberating force for education.

