

Symposium on International Business in a Competitive Shrinking World

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Welcome to Ohio University and to this symposium on international business in a competitive, shrinking world. The symposium, jointly sponsored by Ohio University and Chubu University, marks the twentieth anniversary of the educational agreements between our two universities.

The discussions will focus on the need to build business relationships with companies from other countries and will specifically highlight Japan and America. This is highly pertinent, given the number of Japanese companies already doing business in Ohio.

Ohio and Ohio University are actively involved in effort to expand and facilitate business relationships with Japan and other countries in the Pacific Rim. For example, I was a member of the two trade missions led by governors of Ohio to Japan and Southeast Asia. In 1990, the State of Ohio and the Prefecture of Saitama in Japan began a sister-state relationship which includes an academic exchange program for university students. As part of the Governors' Scholarship Program, Ohio University established four tuition scholarships for graduate students from Saitama.

The economies of Japan and the United States are linked together inextricably. If we and our children are to live well, we must learn not only to compete with each other but also to cooperate in a world which year by year moves rapidly toward economic, political, and social interdependence. We need to keep in mind that statements about difference - such as, Japan and America have different ways of doing business - are not value judgments but descriptions of facts. To function well in this global environment, we all must greatly expand our understanding and acceptance of differences in our world.

It is our hope that this symposium will contribute to that understanding and acceptance and that this will be only the first of many such discussions to held here and in Japan.