

Seeing You Smile Makes Me Smile Too

Tagajo Restaurant (Miyagi) GEL (Guest Experience Leader) Kazuko Sasaki-san

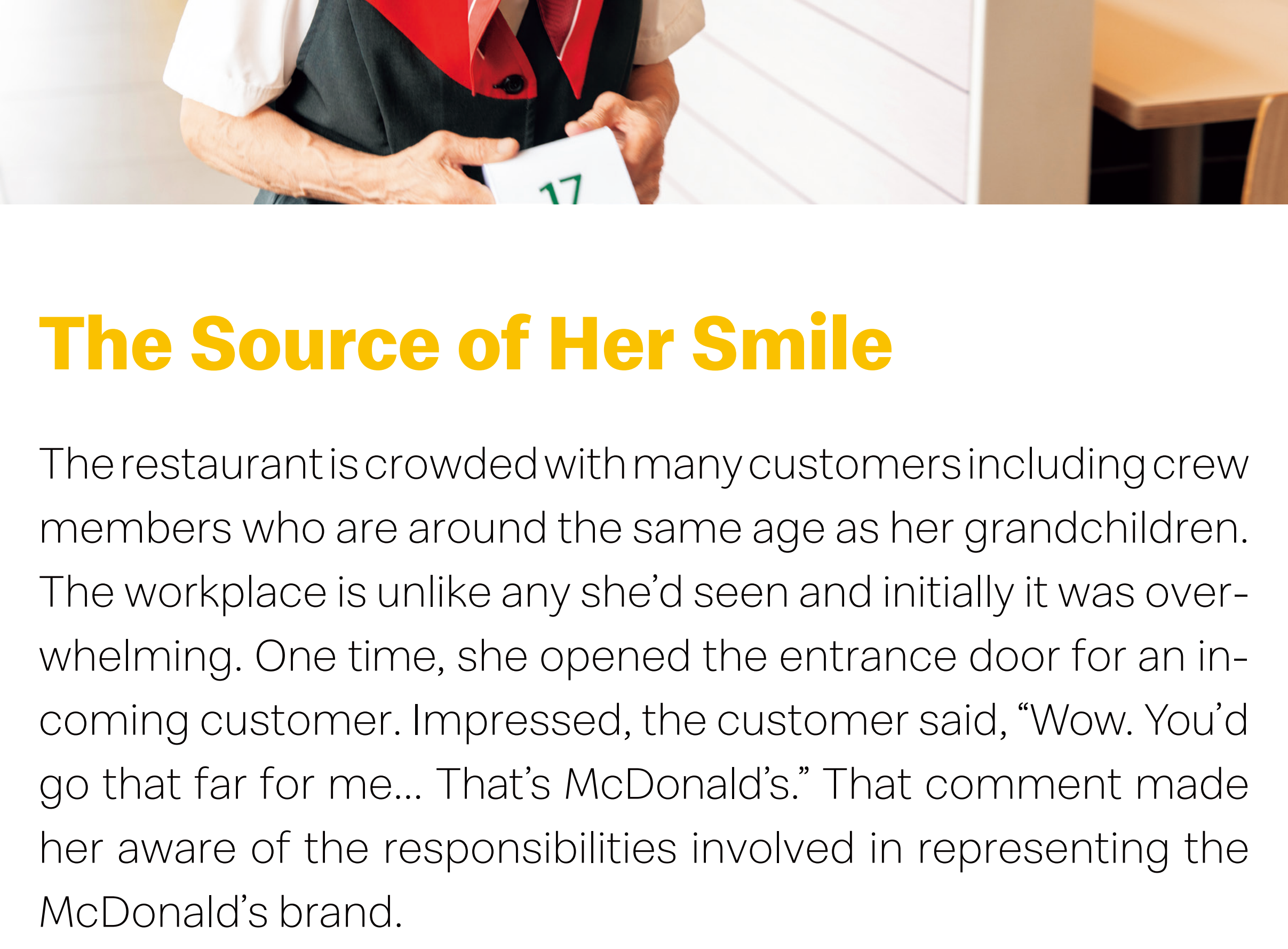
Three years after selling her capsule hotel business, and with encouragement from her family, she became a crew member at the age of 81. Her diverse work experience and personality led to her current role as a GEL. Delivering orders and seeing children smile; that's her favorite moment.

I Want to Work, One More Time

"Why not apply for work at McDonald's?" It was in the early summer of 2024 when her family suggested this idea. Sasaki-san held various jobs—credit union staff, golf caddy, corporate clerk—and managed a capsule hotel business until the coronavirus pandemic forced her to close it.

Feeling sad, she thought, "maybe this is it" and began making plans for retirement. Her family's suggestion came as a surprise. While Sasaki-san was enthusiastic about the prospect of returning to work, she was uncertain whether she would be able to take a position at McDonald's.

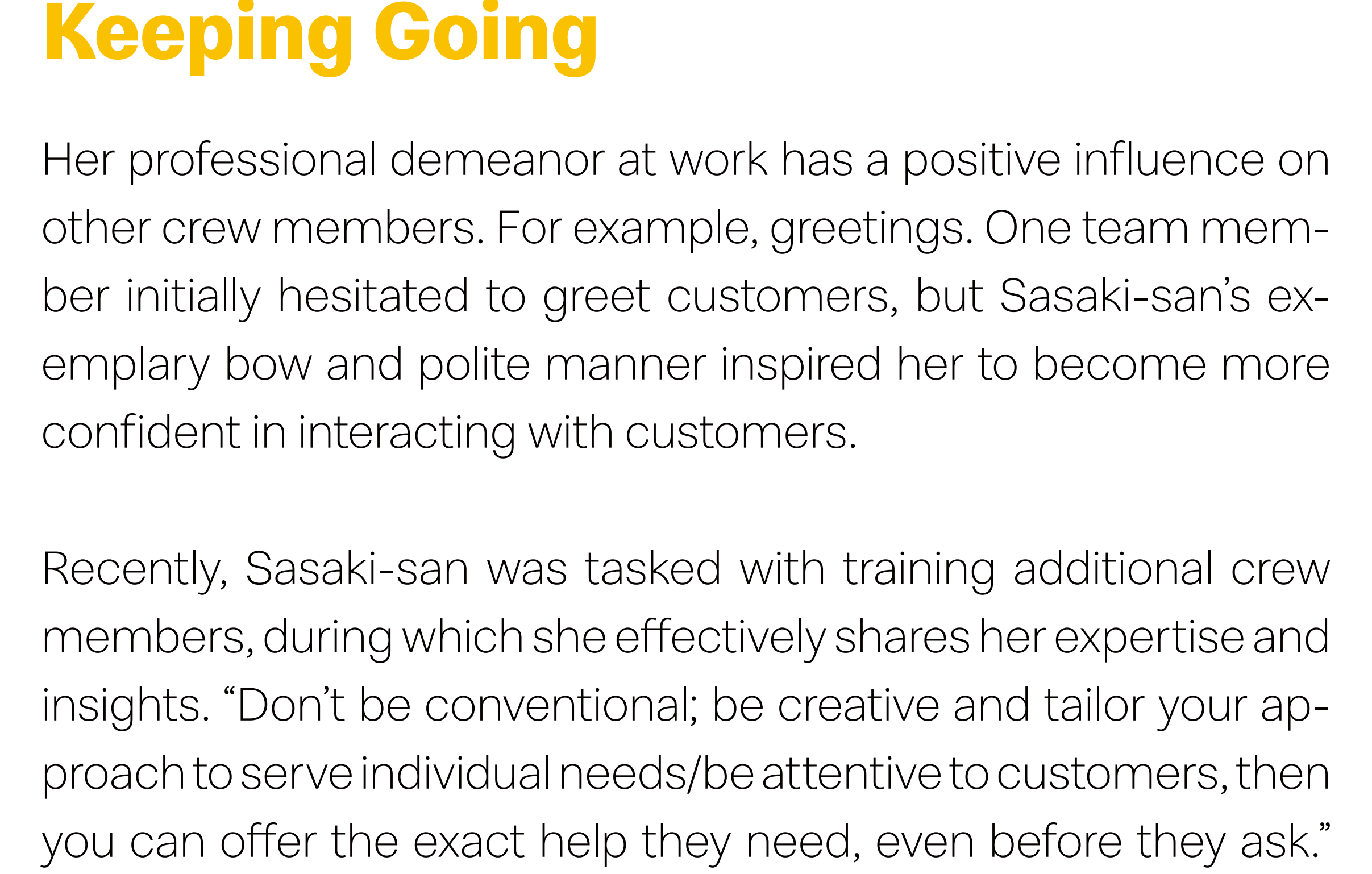
However, despite her concerns, she was hired immediately. Her positive posture, polite greetings, and effective customer interactions led to her quick promotion to a GEL position after working as a crew member.



The Source of Her Smile

The restaurant is crowded with many customers including crew members who are around the same age as her grandchildren. The workplace is unlike any she'd seen and initially it was overwhelming. One time, she opened the entrance door for an incoming customer. Impressed, the customer said, "Wow. You'd go that far for me... That's McDonald's." That comment made her aware of the responsibilities involved in representing the McDonald's brand.

"Wouldn't I be a nuisance?" Although she had concerns initially, her enjoyment of working at McDonald's kept her going. "Working here is my source of strength," says Sasaki-san as she looks around the seated customers—which includes the big smiles of children when she serves them meals, the numerous positive feedback, and the improvement in customers' demeanor following her warm greetings. Her top moment is helping customers have a positive experience. Sasaki-san values McDonald's because making others smile there also brings her smile.



Keeping Going

Her professional demeanor at work has a positive influence on other crew members. For example, greetings. One team member initially hesitated to greet customers, but Sasaki-san's exemplary bow and polite manner inspired her to become more confident in interacting with customers.

Recently, Sasaki-san was tasked with training additional crew members, during which she effectively shares her expertise and insights. "Don't be conventional; be creative and tailor your approach to serve individual needs/be attentive to customers, then you can offer the exact help they need, even before they ask." Although incremental, consistent daily practice has fostered a culture of hospitality across the restaurant. As a result, Sasaki-san is now regarded as an invaluable member of the team.

"Today is my shift day!" She wakes up eagerly, cycles to the restaurant, and provides personalized service. Although the restaurant is busy and she is 81, she shows no signs of fatigue and impresses her colleagues. "I want to stay healthy, keep working, and keep going for years ahead." With joy in her heart, Sasaki-san continues to bring smiles to customers.



Sasaki-san's

Unexpected Moments at McDonald's!

Despite her extensive life experience, Sasaki-san still encountered some unexpected moments as a crew member. We asked her the appealing aspects of working at McDonald's:

1 I meet a lot of customers every day!

Sasaki-san "McDonald's is 'home' to everyone and many customers from different backgrounds spend time in their own way. First, I was overwhelmed at the diversity and number of customers. This was new to me, but I enjoy taking on new challenges. I find working here rewarding, particularly when I am able to provide excellent customer service and navigate peak hours successfully through effective teamwork."



2 Operational strength, the backbone of restaurant operations!

Sasaki-san "McDonald's offers regular, limited time and many other menu items. A well-established operation system enables the restaurant to serve all these items beautifully and speedily with great taste at any time, not to mention the people that prepare perfect food with great operational skills!"



3 A workplace where anyone can work in their own way!!

Sasaki-san "McDonald's offers a variety of work positions that are open to individuals of all ages and genders where they can give their best. Restaurant colleagues consistently provide positive feedback on my performance in this role such as "You excel in this position! / You can do it!" which enhances my confidence and satisfaction at work."

