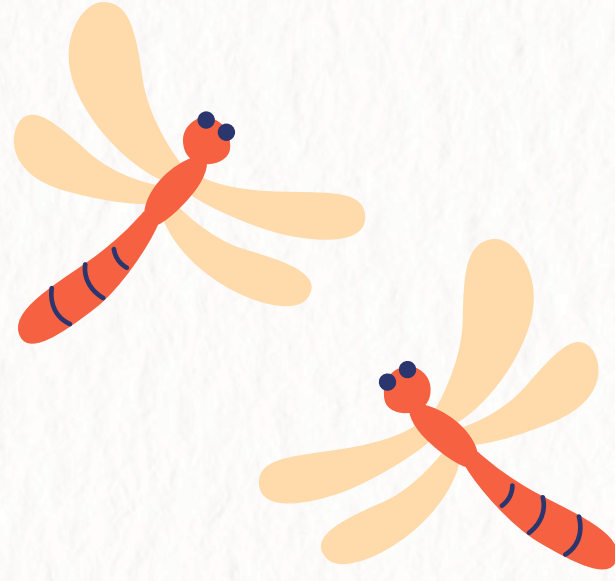




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يُونِيسْكَو: اِسْلَامُ اِنْتَارَاغُشِيَا مِلْدِيَسِيَا
Garden of Knowledge and Virtue

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO
EFFECTIVE DA'WAH IN
JAPANESE SOCIETY



FROM RESPECT TO
REVELATION:
BRIDGING HEARTS
THROUGH DA'WAH
IN JAPAN



From Respect to Revelation: Bridging Hearts Through Da'wah in Japan

**A Practical Guide to
Effective Da'wah in Japanese Society**

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Abstract

This research-based guide provides a practical approach for those who wish to share the message of Islam within the unique cultural setting of Japan. It begins by outlining the general characteristics of the Japanese people and the main challenges involved in performing da'wah, before moving on to suggestions for how one can prepare oneself for this task. Practical ways of engaging with the Japanese community are then explored, with examples of effective communication and common pitfalls to avoid. Ultimately, the guide is not just about techniques, but about transforming da'wah into a compassionate and respectful invitation — one that builds bridges of understanding and leaves a lasting impression of Islam's beauty.



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INTRODUCTORY MESSAGE



Welcome to ‘From Respect to Revelation: Bridging Hearts Through Da’wah in Japan – A Practical Guide to Effective Da’wah in Japanese Society’.

This guide has been carefully designed and developed based on theoretical foundations, practical insights, and extensive research to ensure its relevance and cultural appropriateness within the Japanese context.

Actions leading to this guide:

- Analysing past studies – reviewing previous academic research on da’wah efforts, language and cultural factors influencing communication in Japan.
- Studying videos to understand the Japanese cultural context.
- Studying speeches by public figures in Japan – Observing how they engage with their audience, structure their speech, and build trust and credibility.
- Interviewing the Founder of Japan Da’wah Centre, Osaka, Japan, and gaining direct insights from the experienced da’wah practitioner to understand real-world approaches.

INTRODUCTORY MESSAGE



The development of this guide was supported by the
Japan Da'wah Centre, Osaka, Japan (JDC)

Objectives of this guide:

- To serve as a basic and practical guide for those who wish to engage in da'wah with non-Muslims in Japan.
- To help those interested master how to convey the message of Islam effectively.
- To provide information on how to initiate and handle meaningful discussions on Islam or misconceptions of it.
- To guide on how to respond to questions respectfully, suitable to Japanese culture and values.

DEFINING DA'WAH



WHAT IS DA'WAH?



Surah Ar-Rum (30:30) teaches that Allah has created every human being with a natural disposition (fitrah) to recognize and worship Him, but many do not realize this divine imprint. The verse states:

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ
ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

"So direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. [Adhere to] the fitrah of Allah upon which He has created [all] people. No change should there be in the creation of Allah. That is the correct religion, but most of the people do not know."

Hence, da'wah which in Arabic means "to call," "to invite," or "to supplicate" is the act to awaken the natural disposition (fitrah) that Allah has instilled in every human being. It is a noble act of inviting others to understand, reflect upon, and embrace the teachings of Islam. It should help people reconnect with their spiritual origin and fulfill the very purpose for which they were created: to know, love, and worship Allah. In doing so, da'wah becomes both a spiritual calling and a humanitarian duty—gently guiding people back to their true selves through the light of divine guidance.

Performing da'wah is a noble and rewarding act. Allah highlights its value in **Surah Fussilat (41:33)**:

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

"And who is better in speech than one who invites to Allah and does righteousness and says, 'Indeed, I am of the Muslims.'"

WHY IS THIS GUIDE NEEDED?



At its core, da'wah is not about imposing beliefs, but about serving as a compassionate and respectful reminder of the truth that already resides within each soul.

Beyond its theological function, da'wah also fosters mutual understanding, dispels misconceptions about Islam, and strengthens human bonds through sincere, ethical, and respectful dialogue.

This guide is prepared so that da'wah in Japan is delivered with wisdom. Guidance is provided on how to deliver the message of Islam in a way that is clear, culturally sensitive, and appealing to the audience, in the context of Japan. All communication must be done in an ethical and non-manipulative manner. The ability to balance matters of the heart, mind, and language is crucial when inviting others to Islam. This is in line with what is asserted in **Surah Qaf (50:37)**:

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَذِكْرَىٰ لِمَن كَانَ لَهُ قَلْبٌ أَوْ أَلْقَى السَّمْعَ وَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ

“Verily there is a lesson in this for everyone who has a (sound) heart and who listens with an attentive mind.”

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE



COMMON TRAITS AND VALUES OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE



1. Appreciate Collectivism and Harmony

- They usually place the group before individual desires.
- They may keep true feelings private to maintain harmony.
- They would ensure that no one's public image is tarnished.
- They value unity, fairness, and cooperation.
- They often avoid confrontations.

2. Have a Great Sense of Duty and Obligation

- They value loyalty and gratitude.
- They have a strong sense of responsibility toward family, friends, and colleagues.
- They have a high regard for commitment and perseverance.

3. Practice Mindful Communication

- They value relationship-oriented communication.
- They value indirectness.
- They value politeness and respect.
- They value honesty.
- They may express themselves or respond in a subtle manner.

MAIN CHALLENGES IN PERFORMING DA'WAH IN JAPAN



WHAT ARE THE MAIN CHALLENGES?



People who perform da'wah in Japan are predominantly of foreign nationalities; that is, they are Muslims who have migrated from other parts of the world, such as Southeast Asia, the Middle East, or Africa. While their dedication to spreading the message of Islam is commendable, cross-cultural communication poses significant challenges. When individuals from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds interact, misunderstandings can easily arise due to differences in values, worldviews, communication styles, and social norms. These gaps often result in unintended offense, confusion, or misinterpretation of religious messages. In such a context, effective da'wah requires not only knowledge of Islam but also cultural sensitivity and adaptability.

Considering the above, a da'i must be prepared to navigate at least six (6) key challenges when carrying out da'wah in Japan, each of which can impact the clarity and reception of the message delivered.

The Challenges Are:

- Linguistics challenges
- Cultural challenges
- Perceptual challenges
- Social challenges
- Institutional challenges
- Planning challenges



1. Linguistic Challenges

Foreign nationals often face significant challenges in communicating effectively in the Japanese language, especially when it comes to conveying complex religious concepts such as tawhid (the oneness of God), prophethood, and Islamic jurisprudence. Additionally, the existing body of Islamic literature available in Japanese is still quite limited. Even where translations exist, many lack proper cultural adaptation or linguistic precision, which may result in misinterpretations.

Suggestion: Learn some basic conversational Japanese and attend intercultural communication training.

2. Cultural Challenges

Japan's religious and philosophical traditions—rooted in Shintoism, Buddhism, and Confucian ethics—have cultivated a worldview that often contrasts with other religious frameworks. Concepts such as monotheism, divine law, and prophetic authority are frequently seen as foreign and incompatible with Japanese cultural norms. Moreover, Japanese society tends to regard religion as a private matter, and overt religious outreach is generally perceived as intrusive or socially inappropriate. The conservative social norms and emphasis on social harmony can discourage religious dialogue.

Suggestion: Avoid aggressive communication or personal topics. Engage in communication that focuses on shared values such as topics related to compassion, justice, respect for nature, humility, and community well-being.



3. Perceptual Challenges

Public perception of Islam in Japan is heavily influenced by global media narratives, which often associate Islam with violence, extremism, or political instability. This negative portrayal fosters suspicion and anxiety among the general public, particularly in the wake of international terrorist incidents. The lack of exposure to authentic Islamic practices and voices within Japanese mainstream media further entrenches stereotypes and misunderstandings.

Suggestion: Demonstrate good character and personality (‘akḥlāq). Show compassion, humility, respect, and be a good listener. Be kind and trustworthy.

4. Social Challenges

Japanese converts to Islam, or “reverts,” often experience dual marginalization—being estranged from both their native communities and, at times, from ethnic Muslim communities due to cultural or linguistic differences. The process of conversion frequently results in family rejection, workplace difficulties, or social isolation. This sense of alienation can be particularly acute for female converts, who may face compounded challenges due to gendered expectations within both Japanese and Muslim cultural frameworks.

Suggestion: Involve the reverts in activities where they would feel a sense of belonging and importance. Create space or support groups to allow meetings, discussions, and sharing of experiences.



5. Institutional Challenges

Many Islamic organizations in Japan operate on limited financial and human resources. Most mosques are established and maintained by foreign communities and rely on volunteer-based administration. The lack of full-time staff and professional training hampers these organizations' ability to plan systematically and execute da'wah programs. Additionally, interfaith dialogue and public outreach remain underdeveloped, often constrained by bureaucratic regulations and societal reluctance.

Suggestion: Help to create content through social media platforms or printed materials. Organize small but consistent programmes with targeted groups in the society.

6. Planning Challenges

Sharing Islam in Japan requires careful and strategic planning. Japanese society values clarity, structure, and logic, so simply delivering random information about Islam may lead to confusion or disinterest. Without a well-organized approach, even sincere efforts can fall short.

Suggestion: Know and use personal strengths well. Introduce Islam patiently and progressively. As a da'i, talk about common topics that can be easily explained well first, before going into complex ones.



SELF-PREPARATIONS BEFORE PERFORMING DA'WAH IN JAPAN





SOME BASIC BUT IMPORTANT SELF-PREPARATIONS

1. Continuously Build Good Islamic Knowledge

Allah S.W.T. commands in **Surah Al-Aḥzāb (33:70)**:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا

“O believers! Be mindful of Allah and say what is right.”

Japanese society tends to view religious preaching with caution because religious beliefs are often considered personal, non-dogmatic, and deeply rooted in cultural traditions. So, da'ies must possess a clear, accurate, and good understanding of the core branches of Islamic knowledge. These include the oneness of Allah (tawḥīd), the Prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him), the divine origin and message of the Qur'an, and the concept of accountability through divine reward and punishment in the afterlife.

Da'ies must therefore approach all da'wah activities with careful preparation and deep understanding. Poor Islamic knowledge that leads to misinterpretations or overly rigid presentations of Islam can easily reinforce stereotypes among the Japanese that Islam is foreign, strict, or incompatible with Japanese values.



2. Continuously Learn About the Japanese Culture

Allah S.W.T. stated in **Surah Al-Hujurāt (49:13)**:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَنُّكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

“O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.”

The verse above reminds us that effective da’wah begins with understanding and honouring the backgrounds of others, and fostering an atmosphere of respectful, meaningful dialogue. In the Japanese context, intercultural encounters can cause discomfort or apprehension, especially if individuals perceive that their social identity or status is at risk. Therefore, a da’i must exercise cultural intelligence by being mindful of how they deliver religion-related messages, both verbally and non-verbally. Considering the Japanese culture, a da’i should always avoid aggressive speeches. Da’ies should show patience and make an effort to respond with politeness, kindness, and composure. In doing so, a da’i is also upholding the Islamic principles of wisdom (hikmah), gentleness (rifq), and honour in all forms of communication.



3. Continuously Sharpen Direct and Indirect Persuasive Communication Skills

Allah S.W.T. tells in **Surah An-Nahl (16:125)** that:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجِدِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in the best manner. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His path, and He is most knowing of who is rightly guided.”

Persuasive communication skills will enable a da'i to deliver messages with wisdom, compassion, tact, and respect. Direct persuasion refers to clear, structured, and verbal messages that explain why certain beliefs or actions are encouraged in Islam. This approach can take place during lectures, public dialogues, or one-on-one explanations of Islamic beliefs. On the other hand, indirect persuasion involves using facial expressions, body language, tone of voice, and strategic word choices such as emotive language to convey messages. Mastery of it enables a da'i to share the message of Islam in ways that are ethical, non-manipulative, and appropriate to the Japanese cultural mindset.



4. Continuously Develop Media Literacy and Sensitivity

Allah SWT wants us to prepare with every possible strength to defend and uphold the truth. Seen in **Surah Al-Anfāl (8:60)**:

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهِبُونَ بِهِ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ
وَالْآخَرِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَهُمُ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُهُمْ ۚ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
يُؤْفَإِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ ٦٠

“Prepare against them what you ‘believers’ can of ‘military’ power and cavalry to deter Allah’s enemies and your enemies as well as other enemies unknown to you but known to Allah. Whatever you spend in the cause of Allah will be paid to you in full, and you will not be wronged.”

In today’s digital age, particularly in technologically advanced societies like Japan, the preparation of da’wah would involve mastering digital technology. With strong media literacy, da’ies can communicate Islam’s message widely and efficiently through various digital platforms. These platforms must be used responsibly and ethically, upholding Japan’s cultural values of trust and credibility. Words must be chosen carefully to build harmony, without causing complex theological disputes, political controversy, or offensive sentiments that could hinder the message of Islam.



5. Continuously Reflect on Own Intention and Motivation for Performing Da'wah.

Allah promises a reward to those who persevere. Mentioned in **Surah Al-'Asr (103: 1-3):**

وَالْعَصْرِ. إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ. إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ
وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

"By the 'passage of time!, Surely humanity is in 'grave' loss, except those who have faith, do good, and urge each other to the truth, and urge each other to perseverance."

Performing da'wah in a culture that values privacy in matters of faith, such as Japan, requires patience, perseverance, and mental resilience. A sincere intention (ikhlāṣ) is a powerful inner motivator in a da'i, that can drive genuine commitment and emotional dedication. This inner strength is important in shaping everyone who performs da'wah to navigate themselves and face Japan's unique social and cultural challenges while fostering Islamic faith.



CONNECTING HEARTS TO REVELATIONS - DELIVERING DA'WAH



ACTIONS THAT CONNECT THE HEARTS



1. Start With Clear Intentions In Mind

The value of an action depends on the intention behind it. A good da'i remembers that the main intention in da'wah is to convey the message of Islam in clear, correct, and proper ways. The messages can be delivered informatively or persuasively in stages according to the audience and situation.

A da'i should frequently intend to promote understanding, nurture spiritual awareness, and sincerely guide others toward a meaningful connection with or submission to Allah. To act with a clear intention or objective, a da'i can start by saying:

「少しお話しさせていただいてもよろしいでしょうか。」

(Shōshi ohanashi sasete itadaite mo yoroshii deshō ka?)

“May I have a moment to share something with you?”

「ご迷惑でなければ、少しお話しさせていただきます。」

(Gomeiwaku de nakereba, sukoshi ohanashi sasete kudasai.)

“If it's not troublesome, may I share a little thought with you?”

It is also important that a da'i has the intention to listen attentively to opinions or questions and avoid arguments while sharing beneficial knowledge.



2. Dress and Behave Appropriately

First impressions matter. In Japan, people may judge a speaker by appearance before they listen. In general, a da'i should dress with cleanliness, modesty, and harmony in mind. Wear modest attire that is neat, clean, and neutral in tone with subtle incorporation of Islamic identity if needed, to respect Japanese customs and show sensitivity to Japanese aesthetics of simplicity.

A da'i should show a trustworthy image that draws people in. Smile and be approachable. Use non-verbal cues to build trust and rapport by practicing:

- **Polite bowing:** Even a small bow conveys respect and humility, which are values shared in Islam.
- **Calm facial expressions:** Smiling gently while listening signals warmth without aggression.
- **Good posture and distance:** Standing or sitting with a straight but relaxed posture and maintaining an appropriate distance (not too close, not too distant) also displays respect and consideration.
- **Controlled hand gestures:** Using small, calm gestures instead of large or forceful movements will display modesty.
- **Gentle and occasional eye contact:** This is to show attentiveness and sincerity.
- **Small nods:** This indicates that the listener is engaged and values what the other person is saying.
- **Brief pauses or silence before responding to a question:** This signals respect and thoughtfulness.
- **Soft voice tones when presenting ideas:** This tone will convey harmony.



3. Plan to Be Always Polite

A da'i must always plan to be polite and respectful in both words and manners. This requires patience, the willingness to repeat explanations when necessary, and sensitivity to the listener's perspective. Most Japanese audiences are unfamiliar with Islamic terms and concepts. So, it is important to tailor messages of da'wah according to the listener's background and level of understanding.

Messages should be delivered clearly, simply, and precisely without sounding condescending, imposing, or preaching from a higher position, but rather to demonstrate a sense of shared reflection. A da'i's tone of voice must be calm, gentle, respectful, and kind. Examples of polite phrases that can be used are:

ご存知かどうかわかりませんが...

(Gozonji ka dō ka wakarimasen ga...)

“I’m not sure if you already know, but...”

This helps to avoid assuming ignorance or pressure.

もしご興味があれば、少しだけ説明させていただいてもよろしいでしょうか。

(Moshi gokyōmi ga areba, sukoshi dake setsumei sasete itadaite mo yoroshii deshō ka.)

“If you’re interested, may I briefly explain?”

By saying this, a da'i gives the audience a sense of control in the communication.



4. Express Gratitude and Appreciation

Always show appreciation to build trust and maintain respectful relationships, as Allah expects us to do. A da'i needs to be attentive and recognize people's efforts to see and listen to what is said, no matter how minor the effort may seem. Showing gratitude reflects humility and aligns with the Japanese cultural value of ***giri***—the sense of duty and appreciation that holds social ties together. In Japan, subtle expressions of gratitude often speak louder than direct praise. So, learning to express thanks sincerely and frequently is useful to nurture harmony and respect.

To use culturally appropriate greetings and acknowledgements, even for small gestures shown, a da'i can say:

こんにちは、今日はお時間をいただきありがとうございます
(Konnichiwa, kyō wa ojikan o itadaki arigatō gozaimasu)
“Hello, thank you for your time today.”

「お時間とご関心をいただき、誠に感謝申し上げます。」
(Ojikan to gokanshin o itadaki, makoto ni kansha
mōshiagemasu.)

“I sincerely express my gratitude for the time and attention you have given me.”

ありがとうございます。
(arigatou gozaimasu)

“Thank you.”



5. Include Sincere Compliments When Communicating

It is also good to build emotional connections through giving sincere compliments suitable to the situations a da'i is in. For instance, a da'i can praise the audience and make them feel appreciated.

In informal situations, a da'i can observe how a person looks and say:

今日は素敵ですね。
(Kyō wa suteki desu ne)
“You look nice today”,

When someone has a nice name during first introductions, a da'i can say in a very polite and gentle tone:

素敵なお名前ですね。
(Suteki na onamae desu ne.)
That is a beautiful name.

In situations where someone asks a good question in a friendly and relaxed situation, a da'i can praise the person by saying:

鋭い質問ですね。
(Surudoī shitsumon desu ne.)
“That’s a sharp/good question.”



6. Attract Attention and Interest Through Shared Values and Common Beliefs.

One of the most effective ways to open hearts and reduce resistance is by starting a conversation with shared values rather than differences. When speaking to Japanese audiences, a da'i can create a natural bridge by talking about Islamic virtues as taught in the Al-Quran and Hadiths that align with Japanese cultural ideals. For example, a da'i can frequently talk about values that are central to both Islam and Japanese societies, such as:

誠意 (seii)

sincerity, genuine intention

正直 (shōjiki)

honesty

優しさ (yasashisa)

kindness

年長者への尊敬 (nenchōsha e no sonkei)

respect for elders

謙虚 (kenkyō)

humility

規律 (kiritsu)

discipline



7. Listen Attentively and Respond

Compassionately

Many non-Muslims in Japan may have little or no prior knowledge of Islam, and some may only be familiar with the misconceptions presented in the media. Therefore, a da'i can start by listening attentively to them first and then reply compassionately so that they feel respected, understood, and deeply valued. To encourage the audience to express themselves, a da'i can say:

「どのようなことに関心をお持ちですか。」

(Dono yōna koto ni kanshin o omochi desu ka?)

“What kind of things are you interested in?”

「何か気になることや質問はありますか。」

(Nanika ki ni naru koto ya shitsumon wa arimasu ka?)

“Do you have anything you're curious about or any questions?”

「率直なご意見をぜひお聞かせください。」

(Sotchoku na goiken o zehi okikasete kudasai)

“Please feel free to share your honest opinion.”

If a question reflects a common misconception about Islam, acknowledge it kindly before clarifying. For example:

「そのように思われる方も多いですが、実際のイスラームでは～です。」

(Sono yō ni omowareru kata mo ōi desu ga, jissai no Isurāmu dewa ~ desu.)

“Many people think that way, but in reality, in Islam it is...”.



8. Focus on Delivering Logic

The Japanese are a highly rational and evidence-driven society. They value reason, structure, and data in discussions. So, speak about Islam as more of a logical framework rather than just a belief system, referring to the Al-Quran and Hadiths.

To show reasons, a da'i can encourage reflection and observation on natural phenomena and scientific data, along with what is stated in the Al-Quran, such as reminders not to waste resources and to protect the Earth, or on explanations of human development that correspond to modern biology. To demonstrate the structure in Islamic practices, for instance, linking daily prayer times with the Japanese appreciation for time discipline can be made, when a da'i informs:

「イスラームの五回の礼拝は、規則正しい時間に行われます。これは心と生活に秩序を与える仕組みです。」

(Isurāmu no go-kai no reihai wa, kisokutadashii jikan ni okonawaremasu. Kore wa kokoro to seikatsu ni chitsujo o ataeru shikumi desu.)

“The five daily prayers are performed at fixed times. This is a system that gives order to both heart and life.”

「イスラム教徒もまた、心身の調和を保ち、体の機能を高めるために断食を実践しています。」

(Isuramu-kyōto mo mata, shinshin no chōwa o tamochi, karada no kinō o takameru tame ni danjiki o jissen shite imasu.)

“Muslims also practice fasting to balance the mind and improve the body's functions.”



9. Speak With No Force or Compulsion

A da'i should align the Islamic principle of no compulsion in religion with the Japanese value of personal choice and freedom. Forceful da'wah will turn people off and give the impression that Islam practises pressure or aggression.

A da'i can focus all messages from the perspective of a Muslim. For example, a da'i can say:

イスラム教徒として、私たちは唯一の神が存在すると考えています。

(Isuramu kyōto to shite, watashitachi wa yuiitsu no kami ga sonzai suru to kangaete imasu.)

“As Muslims, we think/believe that there is One God.”

ムスリムとして、私たちは平和を大切にしています。

(Musurimu to shite, watashitachi wa heiwa o taisetsu ni shite imasu.)

“As Muslims, we value peace.”

Small verbal responses are also useful to show patience and attentiveness, creating a natural and harmonious two-way flow. For example:

「はい、そうですね。」 (Hai, sō desu ne)

Yes, that's right

「なるほど。」 (Naruhodo)

I see / I understand.

「ええ。」 (Ee)

Yes / I agree.

「そうなんですか。」 (Sō nan desu ka)

Oh, is that so?



10. Offer Solutions for All Problems Highlighted

A da'i may be proposing change based on the common problems seen in society or the world. It is important to remember that in doing so, a solution must also be suggested so that the conversation is more pleasant without sounding like giving a criticism or a complaint that can create discomfort or resistance. Offering solutions can also show a da'i's sincerity and consideration for the audience's needs.

Proposing solutions builds trust and interest. A listener is more likely to feel engaged and motivated if they sense that the da'i is not just pointing out flaws but also providing clear, positive steps forward, which demonstrates care and responsibility, qualities that are highly valued in Japanese society. To achieve this, a da'i should use inclusive language that emphasizes cooperation rather than confrontation. A da'i can say things like:

人々が直面している問題もありますが、イスラムの教えを取り入れることで、より調和のとれた解決につながるのではないのでしょうか。

(Hitobito ga chokumen shite iru mondai mo arimasu ga, Isuramu no oshie o toriireru koto de, yori chōwa no toreta kaiketsu ni tsunagaru no dewa nai deshō ka.)

There are indeed problems people face, but by incorporating Islamic teachings, perhaps we can find solutions that bring greater harmony.

**CONNECTING HEARTS
THROUGH TACTFUL
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS-
SOME EXAMPLES OF
CONTEXTS**





1. “Why does Islam have so many rules?

Shouldn’t people just do whatever makes them happy?”

Weak answer:

Because Allah commanded us to follow these rules.

Thoughtful answer:

The rules in Islam are not meant to limit personal joy, but to guide us toward lasting happiness and spiritual well-being.

Islam teaches that true happiness is found in submitting to Allah’s will and following the path He has outlined. These guidelines help believers live in harmony with others, promote justice, and avoid actions that might bring temporary pleasure but lead to long-term harm, both to the individual and society.

Moreover, the rules are designed to cultivate inner peace, gratitude, and a connection to the Creator, which are seen as the ultimate sources of contentment. Islam’s perspective on happiness is not just about fulfilling personal desires, but achieving a balanced life that aligns with both spiritual and worldly well-being.

Follow-up question:

If everyone in society just does whatever made them happy, wouldn’t that sometimes cause problems? Society would be in chaos if everyone followed only their desires. Isn’t it better to have rules that ensure happiness for everyone, not just individuals?



2. “Why does Islam oppose LGBT?”

Weak answer:

Because it is haram!

Thoughtful answer:

In Islam, the relationship between a person and Allah is central, and this includes how individuals approach and understand their sexuality. Islam’s teachings on gender and sexual relations are primarily rooted in the belief that sexuality should be expressed within the framework of a heterosexual marriage between a man and a woman. Sexual relations are considered sacred and intended to be between a man and a woman within marriage, as part of fulfilling one’s role in maintaining the moral order of society. Islam also values the preservation of lineage (nasab) because it preserves family identity, inheritance rights, and the social and moral structure of the community. The family unit is seen as the cornerstone of a stable society, and the offspring that result from a lawful marriage between a man and a woman carry the family name, lineage, and legacy.

Follow-up question:

How might we preserve family lineage, ancestral heritage, and cultural continuity in our society if concepts like gender, marriage, and parenthood are increasingly being redefined?



3. “Why can’t Muslims drink alcohol?”

Weak answer:

Because Allah forbids it!

Thoughtful answer:

In Islam, alcohol is completely prohibited not as a form of mere restriction, but a form of protection. By avoiding alcohol entirely, the door to many potential physical, emotional, social, and spiritual harms is closed before it ever opens. Moreover, modern science and medicine continue to confirm what was taught in Islam over 1,400 years ago that alcohol can damage the liver, impair judgment, increase the risk of mental illness, and harm relationships. Islam's guidance in this area isn't about denying pleasure, but about preserving human dignity, health, and the well-being of society.

Follow-up question:

Doesn't it make sense for us as individuals and as communities to have good values, beliefs and practices that protect us from harm, and have a healthier and safer lifestyle?



4. “If hijab is required in Islam, why don’t all Muslim women wear it?”

Weak answer:

Because they are not good Muslims.

Thoughtful answer:

We know that not everyone will follow the rules and expectations of a society perfectly, and faith is a journey that unfolds at a different pace for each person. In the case of the hijab, some women may need time, encouragement, and personal growth before they feel fully ready to embrace it. What matters is that we continue to support one another with kindness and respect.

Follow-up question:

Isn’t it true that we all appreciate patience and understanding when we are trying to improve ourselves?



5. “Are Islamic practices relevant to how people live today?”

Weak answer:

Yes, of course!

Thoughtful answer:

Some may feel that Islamic practices are only for the past, but Islam actually offers timeless values and beneficial practices. For instance, Muslims have long been taught to respect and take great care of others, always be honest, compassionate, and fair. Practices such as prayers, fasting, and charity have been proven to support health, mindfulness, and social care. Islam provides guidance that helps us to live meaningfully in today’s world.

Follow-up question:

What do we tend to rely on when we seek everlasting peace of mind and comfort?



ACTIONS THAT CAN
BURN BRIDGES
TO THE HEARTS

1. Arguing Instead of Listening and Explaining

Da'wah is for us to share, teach, inform, remind, and suggest changes. Arguing and debating will only create tension and discomfort.

2. Being Too Factual

Being too factual may make us less emotionally sensitive and hinder us from imparting knowledge and facts with gentleness, kindness, patience, and appropriateness.

3. Sounding Too Assertive and Forceful With No Compassion

Being assertive can show confidence, but it may affect our tone, body movement, and facial expressions. Without realizing it, we may raise our voice and exhibit unfavorable movements and expressions.

4. Being Self and Content Focused and Not Audience Focused

Speeches that focus on what the speaker wants to say instead of what the listener needs to hear will only display insensitivity to the listener's background and create a sense of separation.

5. Comparing Islam to Other Religions

The intention of making comparisons might highlight the strength and uniqueness of Islam, but this can come off as giving direct criticisms, which can be perceived as disharmonious, disrespectful and arrogant.

6. Comparing People's Way of Life

Directly comparing Islamic ways to others can come across as judgmental or dismissive of other people's culture and traditions. This can be offensive and create resistance.

7. Using Too Many Foreign Terms and Jargon

Frequent use of complex Arabic terms, concepts, or Islamic jargon may confuse, alienate, or create a sense of distance in non-Muslim listeners.

8. Lacking Positivity and Engaging Storytelling

Without positive messages and engaging storytelling, a speaker would display weak emotional connections with listeners, thus making Islam sound unattractive, rigid, cold, strict, or heavy.

9. Not Prioritizing Politeness

Failure to use polite words, gentle manners, and a kind tone of voice will not open hearts or invite others to listen with deeper interest and appreciation.

10. Forgetting Own Character, Personality, and Attitude

Forgetting one's own character, personality, and attitude can weaken da'wah messages because people notice actions sooner than words. If a person's manners contradict what is being preached, listeners may lose trust and interest.



CONNECTING WITH JAPAN DA'WAH CENTRE (JDC)







MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER OF JAPAN DA'WAH CENTRE

Qs 15:26 And indeed, We created man (Adam) from dried clay, from an altered black mud.

Guidance: Through the Heart, Not Debate

Humans are created from clay, a creation that continuously requires balanced water to become soft and malleable. Clay that is too dry becomes hard and tough, difficult to shape. Clay that is too wet becomes liquid and loses its form.

To make it malleable, it requires time, gentle touch, and sufficient water, not rushed, nor left to dry on its own.

In Japan, almost everyone who is attracted to Islam is not due to debate or logic alone, but through good relationships, calm character, and sincere interaction.

Debate is a less suitable approach. Japanese society highly values dignity and self-respect (pride). Da'wah in the form of "winning an argument" will often only distance them from Islam.

They are more impressed by the spiritual tranquility shown by Muslims. Noble character and honesty in interactions, and the clear and pure concept of God in Islam.



Those who embrace Islam in Japan come from various backgrounds:

- University students and professionals are attracted through social interaction with the Muslim community.
- Young people seeking life values amidst a fast-paced and materialistic modern culture.
- A small number come to Islam after experiencing life crises, family relationship breakdowns, social pressure, or loss of direction in life.

Befriend first, then do da'wah. Islam in their eyes is not just a belief system, but a beautiful way of life that brings peace.

This is why da'wah in Japan is not about convincing, but about presenting a living example. Japan Da'wah Circle (JDC), we emphasize an approach of befriending, guiding, and being patient.

Because like clay, the heart also needs time to absorb, to be soft enough to be shaped, and love to change.



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“A Practical Guide to
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