

“You’re so uncool dad! Why do you wear that ugly blue thing every day?” Every day I ask my dad this same question. He always wears a dusty uniform with his company’s name on it. Why can’t he just wear a stylish business suit like normal dads? He says he wears it to get out into the field as quickly as possible. OK. I get it. But what about me? Are you going to wear that on my birthday party? Again?

My father runs a security company in Yamanashi. His company works to ensure everyone’s safety. Though it is a small local company, he is the president. I always picture presidents sitting on big chairs yelling at people. But he isn’t like that at all. He prefers to work on the field with his employees. He even works on the hottest summer days, and freezing winter nights. As for me, no thanks. There’s no way I could ever do that. Unfortunately, labor scarcity has become a huge problem in Yamanashi. Throughout the prefecture, companies, including my father’s security firm, are having trouble finding enough workers. This means, there are less people to keep everyone safe. So he made a determination. He said, “I will change this situation.” Well, what can he do? I thought. He’s just a single person.

One day, I suddenly got a call from my father. He said, “Turn on the TV.” Guess what I saw? It was my father. He had created a system to solve the labor shortage problem. It was a new revolutionary AI security system. It can monitor crowded places and inform nearby security guards before accidents happen. Thanks to this system, even with fewer workers, they can keep people safe. It was only a local news broadcast, but I saw my father taking action for Yamanashi. Eventually, his AI system was featured on news networks throughout Japan and the world. There are countless unresolved problems around us. However, many of us actually don’t have the courage to step forward. We tend to underestimate our own ability, and give up before we even begin. But my father is different. He doesn’t give up. He faced the situation. At that moment, I really felt that I wanted to be like him.

His love for Yamanashi moved him forward, and it became his motivating cause. “Think global act local.” It’s my father’s motto. Things that we do, however small, can change our communities. Now I have taken my very first step to solve the labor issue. I am volunteering as an interpreter at Junior Chamber International, an NGO dedicated to helping foreigners find work in Yamanashi. My dad solved this problem in his own way. Now I will solve it my way. This is just my first step. Every movement starts with a single step. Making a change is challenging and it requires a lot of courage. But if you take that step, you can definitely change your community, and who knows? Maybe even the world?

As for my dad, I’m sure he’s out working now wearing that same old uniform. This is so embarrassing, but you know what? I’m only saying this once. Dad, you are so cool!

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Like Father, like Daughter