

Note from the Authors

The working title of this book was simply *Kiki*, 危機, which means “crisis” in Japanese. We chose that title because it represents the situation facing many U.S.-based Japanese companies today. These companies are often characterized as being ideal marriages of the best aspects of Japanese and American cultures. The reality in many cases, however, is that some of the worst aspects of each culture—or, at least, those elements which cause conflict through mutual misunderstanding—end up as the dominant influences in U.S.-based Japanese companies. These cross-cultural conflicts constitute a relatively serious threat to successful corporate operations, and this threat is presently strong enough to warrant the use of *Kiki*. But there is more to *kiki* than meets the eye. The two characters or sounds that make up the word have a different meaning if read independently of each other. The first *ki*

