



BoardAsia

Spring 2006

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF THE CONFERENCE BOARD IN ASIA

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May Conference to Spotlight Asian Marketing and Branding Strategies

Responding to an atmosphere of rapid growth, marketing and communication functions in Asian companies have moved from acting as sales support to driving corporate strategy. Professionals tasked with this new role are being asked to leverage their resources to generate exciting new business opportunities that will position their organizations for even greater success. The 2006 Asia-Pacific Marketing and Communication Conference, which will take place on May 24-25 in Hong Kong, will bring together the region's senior-most marketing and communication executives to discuss how they are supporting global brand strategy, gaining regional understanding and striving for competitive advantage.

One highlight of this year's meeting will be a panel on best practices for harnessing the power of interactive communications that will feature Ben Grubbs, marketing director, eBay Hong Kong; Thierry Halbroth, senior creative director, McCann Erickson, Cathay Pacific Central Team; and Sean Rach, managing director, Hong Kong, OgilvyOne Worldwide. There will also be a number of interactive sessions, ranging from "Developing and Managing a Global Brand in Asia," which will be moderated by Eric C. H. Lee, vice president, corporate communications, Unilever (Asia, Africa, Middle East & Turkey), to "The Mobile Revolution," during which Jeffrey Belk, chief marketing officer, Qualcomm, will focus on how the Internet, mobile phones and other technological innovations have altered

the ways companies can communicate with their customers. "Developing Partnerships to Leverage Marketing and Communication Programs in Asia," "Corporate Social Responsibility" and "Maximizing the Marketing Mix" are some of the other topics that will be covered over the course of the two days. In addition to these panels, attendees will hear presentations from such high-level speakers as Oliver Roll, general manager, marketing Asia-Pacific, Microsoft; and Arturo Massa, vice president, marketing and sales, Philip Morris Asia.

Finally, there will be two post-conference workshops. In the first, Bernd H. Schmitt, the Robert D. Calkins professor of business at Columbia Business School and executive director of the Center on Global Brand Leadership, will talk about "Customer Experience Management," examining how leading companies can create a consistent brand experience and manage customer expectations across Asia and around the world. David Ketchum, CEO of Upstream Asia, will lead the other workshop, which will concentrate on "New Frontiers for Corporate Communications." During this session, Ketchum will demonstrate how participants can establish a digital communications roadmap for their businesses as well as how they can benefit from the power of blogs and other innovative technologies.

For more information about this or any other conference, please contact Hanifah Yu, conference administrator, at hanifah.yu@conference-board.org or (852) 2804 1026.

THE CONFERENCE BOARD RECENT CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

Improving Talent Management and Employee Retention

Participants in the Asia-Pacific Talent Management Forum and the Asia-Pacific Human Resources Conference, which took place in Hong Kong on February 28 and March 1–2,

respectively, had a unique opportunity to gain insights from an impressive roster of prestigious speakers.

Terry Endsor, Citigroup's managing director and group head of human resources, corporate and investment banking Asia-Pacific, spoke on how internal branding can help boost employee retention during the forum's keynote speech. "Building internal brand loyalty comes about by ensuring people are well-led and by promoting the good things we do for people," Endsor said. Among the other presenters were Dr. Judith Banister, director of global demographics at The Conference Board, who delivered a demographic take on the search for future talent, and Christine Loh, CEO of Civic Exchange, whose remarks concentrated on linking talent retention to overall issues of public policy.



Attendees exchange information at the **Asia-Pacific Human Resources Conference**

In his keynote address to the Asia-Pacific Human Resources Conference, David L. Cunningham, Jr., Asia-Pacific president for FedEx, talked about the organizational capabilities needed to overcome challenges to growth. The conference featured a wide assortment of panels on topics ranging from mergers and acquisitions to preparing for an outbreak of avian flu and operating in rural China.

Creating Competitive Advantage Through Local Leadership

At Executive Breakfast Briefings in Beijing, Shanghai and Singapore, Andrew N. Bell, program director for The Conference Board Asia-Pacific Human Resources and Leadership Programs, reviewed research results from a survey of large Asia-Pacific organizations on how they are responding to the challenge of developing leaders during a time of significant business expansion in the region. "Asia-Pacific represents the major source of growth within the local market and internationally for many corporations over the next 10 years," Bell told business leaders. "However, the growth opportunities are often in locations where there is currently a limited supply of leadership capability, so it has been necessary for organizations, at least initially, to import leadership rather than to source locally. Only development of local leadership competence, in terms of quantity and quality, will ensure the achievement of future growth targets over the long term."



Andrew N. Bell, Asia-Pacific Human Resources Program Director at The Conference Board and author of *Leadership Development in Asia-Pacific*

The full results of the survey can be found in *Leadership Development in Asia-Pacific:*

Identifying and Developing Leaders for Growth, a new report from The Conference Board.

The study draws on the findings of The Conference Board Working Group on Leadership in Asia-Pacific and presentations and discussions from the June 2005 Asia-Pacific Leadership Development Conference in Singapore. It also profiles current practices at BP, Credit Suisse Group, MTR Corporation and Philips. (See page 4 for a closer look at this report.)

THE CONFERENCE BOARD RECENT EVENTS

Conference Board CEO Visits Asia

In January, Richard Cavanagh, president and CEO of The Conference Board, presented The Conference Board's latest economic forecasts at Executive Breakfast Briefings in Hong Kong and Singapore. While global indicators and U.S. leading economic indexes are exhibiting weaknesses, indicators for Asian countries show signs of modest growth for 2006. Recent increases in fuel prices, which are not only hurting consumers in the United States but are also affecting economies in Europe and Asia, are one of the major forces behind these trends. Overall, though, the impact of higher oil prices on the world economy will be modest.

The informal nature of these briefings encouraged discussions about the key challenges facing the global economy and allowed participants ample time for personal conversations with Mr. Cavanagh. There was also an additional briefing in Singapore on emerging trends in corporate governance that was held in association with the Temasek Forum.



Richard Cavanagh, President and CEO of The Conference Board

Determining Top Challenges for CEOs

Business leaders from across the region met at an April Executive Breakfast Roundtable in Singapore, which was presented in association with Ernst & Young, to define and explore the global concerns top executives currently face. Rainer Schultheis, program director for The Conference Board Asia-Pacific Council of Chief Financial Officers, presented findings from the upcoming *CEO Challenge 2006* report, which is based on the responses of more than 500 CEOs from around the world to the latest edition of this annual survey. Overall results from the survey reveal that the foremost challenges cited by business leaders are *top-line growth*, *profit growth* and *consistent execution of strategy by top management*, all of which appear in the top half of the top 10 list for all businesses, regardless of size. While CEOs in Asia also rated *profit growth* and *top-line growth* as their first and second greatest concerns, their next three concerns were, in order, *speed*, *flexibility*, *adaptability to change*; *customer loyalty/retention*; and *speed to market*. Schultheis also summarized the results of a new survey specifically designed to assess the challenges faced by Singapore's CEOs.

At the Executive Breakfast Roundtable in Singapore, from left to right: **Mildred Tan**, Managing Director for Business Advisory Services, Ernst & Young; **Rainer Schultheis** of The Conference Board; **David Lim**, Group President and CEO, Neptune Orient Lines; and **Hans-Dieter Bott**, Managing Director of Siemens Pte Ltd.



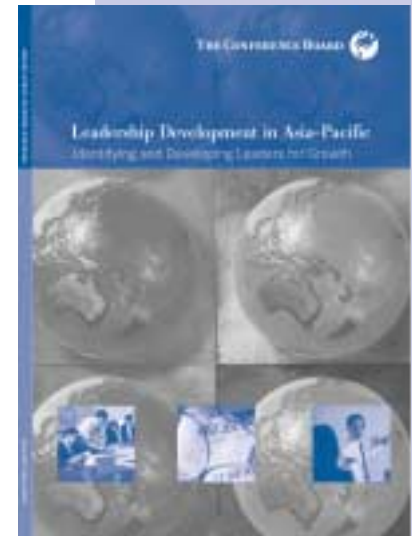
THE CONFERENCE BOARD RECENT RESEARCH

Leadership Development in Asia–Pacific: Identifying and Developing Leaders for Growth Research Report 1387

According to a recent forecast from the International Monetary Fund, the Asia-Pacific region will account for 45 percent of world GDP by 2015, compared to 20 percent for the United States and 17 percent for Western Europe. There are a number of challenges that come with such rapid growth, and one of the most pressing is the cultivation of leaders at the local level. Many organizations, acting in response to the needs of their widespread organizations, are starting to place a major emphasis on accelerating the development of local leaders. These efforts are being driven both by the belief that such leaders have a positive effect on performance and the high expenses associated with maintaining expatriate leaders, who can cost the business at least double the amount of someone employed on an equivalent contract locally.

The Conference Board initiated a research working group in 2005 to study how global organizations are approaching the development of local leaders. *Leadership Development in Asia-Pacific: Identifying and Developing Leaders for Growth* presents the findings of this group and the results of a comprehensive survey of 55 organizations on their local leadership development practices. It also includes case studies from BP, Credit Suisse, MTR Corporation and Philips that offer concrete examples of the types of initiatives currently being pursued, including adapting talent assessment processes to the local context, establishing corporate business schools in Asia, preparing locals for international assignments and comprehensive planning for talent development in China. *Leadership Development in Asia-Pacific* also details current barriers to cultivating local executives, including the proliferation of expatriate leaders, limitations on local talent, mismatches between the location of local talent and business opportunities and difficulties in overcoming established company cultures and behaviors.

To download this or any other research report, please visit The Conference Board Members Only website:
www.conference-board.org/membersonly.htm



THE CONFERENCE BOARD COUNCIL NEWS

Asia-Pacific CFO Council

April's council meeting, which was sponsored by Cadbury Schweppes and held in Singapore, focused on shared services strategies. Amit Banati, regional finance director of Cadbury Schweppes Asia-Pacific, started the proceedings with a profile of Cadbury's business, both globally and in Asia. In other sessions, Michelle Cheung, regional vice president for finance and controlling, Henkel Asia-Pacific, used her company as an example of how to setup and operate a regional financial shared service and Ian Robertson, vice president of the shared service centre at Shell Eastern Petroleum, described Shell's challenges in taking an existing regional shared services structure to the next level. Strategic locations in Asia, disaster recovery and business continuity planning in the event of a major avian flu outbreak were also on the agenda.

Next meeting September (Date and location to be determined)

Asia Pacific Talent, Leadership Development and Organization Effectiveness Council

Council members investigated an array of issues during February's meeting. Guest speaker Noel Goh reported on the research he conducted for the Singapore Workforce Development Agency on Singapore's human capital development frameworks. There are a number of forces that are significantly changing the workplace in Singapore, and his research outlines the implications of this transformation for businesses, employees and economic performance. Other hot topics included how to invigorate e-learning and blended solutions, best practices in moving to a shared services structure, talent brokering best practices and how to invest in development for the future while still meeting current business needs.

Next meeting November 1–3, Shanghai

Asia-Pacific Shared Services Council

The most recent council meeting, which was held in Malaysia in February, concentrated on "Rethinking the Measurement of Shared Services." This topic ignited several in-depth discussions on how best to determine the relative success of all aspects of shared services performance. Shared services organizations often gravitate toward cost measures, both because these metrics reflect the initial driver for introducing the practice and because these entities usually report to the CFO. During a session addressing the operational, organizational and managerial perspectives on shared services, members brainstormed about the other measures that need to be introduced at the beginning of a shared services operation. Another panel covered the need for shared services operations to be able to quantitatively assess cost, productivity and quality information.

Next meeting July 19–21 (Location to be determined)

To find out more about these councils, please contact Caroline Sy, council coordinator, at caroline.sy@conference-board.org or at (852) 2804 1020.

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Recent and Upcoming Events

Human Resources

Conference

- China Human Resources Conference
November 16, Shanghai

Councils

- Human Resources–China
September 6–8, Chongqing, China
- Corporate Governance and Risk Management–India
September 22, Bangalore
- Asia–Pacific Talent, Leadership Development,
and Organizational Effectiveness
November 1–3, Shanghai
- Human Resources–Asia-Pacific
November 9–10, Hong Kong

Operations and Business Processes

Board Briefings

Offshoring and Outsourcing: Thinking It Through:
A Framework For Decision Makers
May 4, Hong Kong
May 5, Singapore
May 9, Shanghai
May 10, Beijing
May 12, Sydney

Operations and Business Processes (cont.)

Conferences

- Supply Chain Forum
June 15, Shanghai, China
- Asia-Pacific Shared Services
November 8–10 (Location to be determined)

Council

- Asia–Pacific Shared Services
July 19–21 (Location to be determined)

Marketing and Communications

Conference

- Asia–Pacific Marketing and Communication
May 24–25, Hong Kong

Councils

- Asia–Pacific Corporate Communication
May 23, Hong Kong
- Asia–Pacific Strategic Marketing
June (Date and location to be determined)

To Find Out More . . .

For more information on any of the upcoming events, please check the appropriate box, type or attach your business card and fax this form to +852 2869 1403

Name _____

Position _____

Functional Area _____

Company _____

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Country _____