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Leo Austin is a Senior Advisor at The China Center for Economics & Business, The Conference Board. He has lived and worked in China for twenty-two years and is one of few foreigners to have led a large Chinese-owned corporation. He has separately completed twelve major China investment and restructuring transactions and served on the board of two US-listed Chinese corporations. Austin's areas of expertise include: China's political-economy, China corporate strategy and development, Chinese organizational behaviour, and China's consumer markets: regions, trade channels.

He is a trustee of the Sir Edward Heath Charitable Foundation, having worked as assistant to the former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. From 2014-17, Leo was CEO and Chairman of Jinliufu, China's leading mainstream spirits brand (C-BPI ranking 2015-16). He was also Vice President of the holding company Vats, China's largest non-state wine and spirits group, where he managed a diverse group of regional companies. Prior to Vats, Leo spent thirteen years as a Partner with Augus Partners Inc, a Beijing-based corporate advisory boutique, where he advised multinationals including LVMH and Carlsberg as well as domestic Chinese groups such as Goldwind (the leading global wind turbine manufacturer in 2015).

His transaction record includes the first restructuring of a mainland-listed company by a foreign group, the first Chinese acquisition of an overseas wind-power project and several of the first major investments by foreign companies in the less-developed far western provinces. From 2000-2001, Leo was a Principal with Incubasia Inc, a Hong Kong-based technology venture capital fund. He began his China career in 1996 as a product and sales manager with Bass Brewers at their Jilin joint-venture. Before coming to China, Leo was an Associate Consultant with LEK Consulting in London. From

2007-2009 he was an Independent Board Director of Nasdaq-listed eLong Inc, China's second largest online travel company, itself controlled by Expedia Inc. From 2011-2013 he was Deputy Chairman of Laihe Rockley, a leading Chinese bio-butanol producer. From 2013-2015 he was an Independent Board Director of NYSE-listed China Ming Yang Wind Power, China's largest non-state wind turbine manufacturer.

Leo has a BA and MA in Modern History and Economics from Brasenose College, Oxford University. He speaks, reads and writes Mandarin Chinese. He has traveled to over half the counties in China.