GLOBAL CEO PROGRAM FOR CHINA

CEO PARTICIPANT PERSPECTIVES: ENGLISH TRANSLATION
The Global CEO Program for China is a special executive education initiative that is offered through an educational partnership among three established business schools worldwide—China Europe International Business School (CEIBS), Harvard Business School (HBS), and IESE Business School (IESE).

Following the final module of the 2006 Global CEO Program for China, the following CEOs shared their perspectives regarding the key challenges they faced in their businesses, their program expectations, as well as the overall value of the program.

HE JINMING
Chairman & CEO
Ren Ren Le Commercial Group

HOU SONGRONG
Chairman & CEO
Konka Group Corporation Ltd.

GUO WEI
President & CEO
Digital China (China) Limited
KEY CHALLENGES

HOU SONGRONG
As the business grows, we inevitably will have to develop outside of China in the international market.

HE JINMING
Experience is important, but theory is even more critical, especially against the backdrop of globalization. Only through study can we acquire the necessary theoretical knowledge to design effective strategies.

GUO WEI
After globalization, the difference between indigenous enterprises and international companies disappeared. Now, even if you compete domestically in China, you must also hold world-class standards.

HE JINMING
How can we compete against—and learn from—giant, powerful multinational companies? This is a question that I have always pondered.
In China, where opportunities abound, CEOs feel that it is not possible to take a retreat from work. However, studying can force you to step away from your daily activities and think about issues in new ways. This was very important to me. The quality of both the professors and the courses you choose is also very important. For it is this quality that holds your attention in the classroom and keeps you focused on the subject matter. If the quality is poor, you will not be stimulated to learn. Another important factor is that more than 30 participants attend this training program. They represent many different industries, and all are very successful. This provides a unique platform for exchanging diverse views and experiences.

The design of the Global CEO Program for China is quite practical. It covers both macro and micro, industrial and commercial business issues. I was most interested in the first lecture that I attended on commercial business. We learned how to design strategies to compete successfully against multinational companies. Many of the cases we studied provided great operational value to guide us in our own businesses.

I was attracted to this program for several reasons. First, the course design suited my needs rather well. Second, the professors were very good, especially those from Harvard Business School, who are the best teachers in their respective fields. And third, this is a joint project between a Chinese business school and world-renowned Harvard Business School. Harvard has always attracted me and being able to study there for some time was an excellent opportunity.
OVERALL VALUE

GUO WEI
Participating in this program helped me open up my mind and view the overall economic development and industry trends from a global perspective. I acquired new ways of thinking about strategy and finance models. For me, the program was very enlightening.

HOU SONGRONG
This program can help CEOs find new ways to improve their leadership skills, and that was an important factor for me. It also helped me to understand systematically all the links and aspects of the entire commercial operation of my own company. A CEO is busy every day and has many responsibilities. I discovered that a business can be dissected along different dimensions into various parts. As a result, I learned how to understand each part of the big picture, while connecting all the parts together to view the company systematically and holistically. This was a good opportunity to share experiences and interact with the faculty and other CEOs. Harvard is known for its case studies. Their usefulness lies in the fact that when you discuss the case, you build a dynamic relationship with the professor. Afterwards, the professor provides you with a framework for analyzing the case. This is when theory and practice intersect. During the class, students interact among themselves, thereby building relationships. These discussions are, in fact, a sharing of hands-on experiences and varied viewpoints of the case studies—another valuable way of learning that this course offered us.

HE JINMING
In short, this program is not only rich in theory, but also very practical. It met our needs by offering timely strategies for solving the business problems that we currently face. Furthermore, we can immediately act on what we just learned and apply it back on the job. For me, this was the most salient feature of the program.
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