

Taking charge

Leung plugs for family's 60-year-old Yan Hing machinery firm, says **Wong Yat-hei**

GAME CHANGERS

At the age of 25, Kelvin Leung has little difficulty striking deals with business tycoons twice his age. Leung, the third-generation owner of Yan Hing Group, a Hong Kong-based machinery manufacturer, is pioneering the company's marketing and sales operations as its chief marketing supervisor.

When Leung first started working for the company in 2009 as a fresh graduate, he saw the need to work on marketing because of the fierce competition from mainland rivals.

"My grandfather, Leung Yin, founded the company in the 1950s in a tiny industrial building in Sham Shui Po. He was exceptionally passionate about machines and he created the first product—a fully manual injection moulding machine, used by plastic-ware factories," he says.

"The quality of the machines from then on was outstanding and word of mouth alone was enough for the company to keep expanding, with little need for marketing. But in the past decade, similar companies on the mainland have been growing rapidly, and so well-planned marketing strategies are required for better development," he says.

An economics graduate of University College London, Leung has always been interested in marketing but had never thought of working for the family business until he began to learn about it.

"My father seldom talks about his work and I had been away from my family, studying in Britain since secondary school, so it was not until the final year of my university studies that I took a good look for the first time at what had actually been supporting me," he says.

Leung began as a trainee in the factory plant during the summer break, learning about the manufacturing process. "From purchasing raw ma-

terials to assembling the machine, the whole process requires strict quality control. It was then I realised the earlier generations had done a great job in maintaining strict quality assurance. Many of the employees who taught me about the manufacturing process had worked there more than 20 years. I saw the effort they put into the business, and as part of the family, I believed I should play a role. In the end, I turned down an offer from a bank to take care of the family business instead," he says.

As a third-generation member, Leung thinks the pressure lies in adapting to changes in the industry.

"Production of plastic ware is getting more complicated, with an ever-growing variety. We serve a real diverse client base—producers of cars,

lection of quality distributors and branches," says Leung.

Finding a reliable distributor is not easy, especially for a young man like Leung. "I am making deals with people in their 40s and 50s. At first, they are hesitant about dealing with me, but I show them respect, and my knowledge of machinery gives them confidence. I focus on long-term, trusting co-operation with every party in which all outcomes are mutual win-win situations. That is a belief shared by my father and grandfather," he says.

Leung prefers collaborating with like-minded businesses rather than well-established ones. "There is a partner in Indonesia who is passing on his business to the next generation and I work very well with them be-

cause we think the same way. We face similar challenges and take a similar approach towards them, which lets us work so well together as business partners," he says.

Leung hopes to achieve higher productivity at a lower cost, and is lucky to have his elder brother to work with him.

"My brother studied for a master of science in production management at Cambridge. He serves as the chief production supervisor, leading internal operations. I am the marketing and sales person who takes care of external affairs. Together, we hope to take our family business to another level and maintain our grandfather's belief in quality products and meeting clients' needs," he says.

Every step we take, we move with our customers

KELVIN LEUNG, CHIEF MARKETING SUPERVISOR, YAN HING GROUP

houseware, electronics telecoms devices, military equipment," he says.

"Machine requirements are different for each customer. Our strategy is to have a selection of 'tailor-made' machines for a wide variety of industries. We constantly absorb new trends in market requirements and make improvements. The key to serving customers is to make sure every step we take, we move with our customers," he says.

The group has big plans, with a production plant in Foshan under construction. "This will be another milestone. With the new plant, productivity is expected to be four times our present production volume. At the same time, our sales volumes will also need to grow four times. I will focus on markets in mainland provinces besides Guangdong, and overseas markets too, especially Southeast Asia, through the se-

MAKING HIS MARK

Kelvin Leung's 5 top aims in the next 10 years



PRODUCTIVITY With the expansion involving a new plant in Foshan, Leung hopes to increase production capacity by four times.

DISTRIBUTION Form a network of quality distributors, agents and branches outside HK, especially on the mainland.

DEVELOPMENT Develop and produce clamping-force machines with up to 3,000 tons of force.

INNOVATION Continue to develop efficient solutions for various industrial customers.

SUCCESS To be one of Asia's top injection-moulding and die-casting machinery firms.



For the full interview, go to www.classifiedpost.com/gamechangers



Photo: Berton Chang

CAREER GUIDE

Get a good payday

Salary is a critical factor in an employee's decision when they move position. It is usually the main component, alongside the job title, that makes up a job offer. Also, especially in Asia, salary is a major deciding factor for many clients when determining whether to even interview someone.

We are asked by most companies to provide a current and expected salary at the first stage of an introduction, so handling the salary part of a job application is probably the main issue a candidate needs guidance on. Be honest about your current salary level. This may sound obvious, but some candidates inflate their current level to achieve a higher potential offer. Many companies ask for salary proof before offering someone a position. Candidates have been tripped up at this stage and received no offer because they were not truthful to start with.

A mistake candidates make when it comes to expected salary is blurring out a number without thinking things through. Most need to know more about the job and benefits before coming up with a number.

One way to avoid this is to ask what type of salary range the company has set. Keep the conversation relaxed and ask: "What kind of salary could someone like me expect?" Your tone should be curious, not demanding. Try to appear flexible and open to negotiation. Don't



Ask: 'What kind of salary could someone like me expect?'

worry too much, though. The easiest way to get the salary you want is to ensure the interviewer goes away feeling they must hire you almost regardless of the cost. If you give them enough reasons to want you on board, the salary part should take care of itself.

Walter Ellicott, managing director, Ellicott Long

CAREER TRACKER

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Susan Chan

BlackRock
Based in Hong Kong, Chan will be head of Asia-Pacific iShares Capital Markets, leading the iShares capital markets and product strategy teams across Asia-Pacific. "This appointment reinforces our commitment to providing guidance on execution and trading strategies, as well as ensuring iShares delivers the onscreen liquidity and transparency clients require," says Jane Leung, head of iShares Asia-Pacific.



Paul Wright

Taubman Asia
Wright has been promoted to group vice-president, leasing. Since joining Taubman as director of leasing in 2006 and being promoted to VP of leasing, he has been a key player in the company's leasing strategy in Asian projects. "[Wright's] in-depth knowledge of best practices helps us close deals with high-quality tenants and introduce a unique merchant mix to shoppers in Asia," says René Tremblay, president, Taubman Asia.



Guohua Jean Zhang

Taubman Asia
As managing director, China, Beijing-based Zhang is responsible for overseeing Taubman's business development, operations and strategic partnerships in China. "[Zhang's] local expertise and network, coupled with his extensive experience in real estate and investment, is exactly what we need to drive our expansion strategy in China," says René Tremblay, president, Taubman Asia.

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CAREER DOCTORS

Think hard before you leave the law

I am a qualified solicitor who has practised for four years and works for one of the best international firms. But the longer I stay in law, the more sure I am it's not for me. I learned of management training programmes for fresh graduates. Will they consider me? *bluebluejay*



I recommend you do a great deal of research and think very carefully before making any hasty decisions, as it sounds like you have an excellent role in a good company. Think about what you like or dislike about your current job and identify whether you can change roles, industry focus or company. Do research to secure a role that aligns with your long-term goals.

Remember, financial rewards outside the legal profession are significantly lower, and the potential pay cut would in the short term be substantial.

What is the career track for the management trainee programme? Speak to peers, industry professionals and recruitment consultants, attend careers fairs and do more research. Realistically, you need to convince hiring managers of your commitment and willingness to accept lower pay.

Lawyers often make a successful

change through their own contacts or networking, such as a corporate finance lawyer taking a front-office IBD or a quasi-legal or business-related role in an in-house corporate. Other options may be a business development role, usually within or related to the legal industry, a learning and development position, legal editorial or part-time teaching.

Another option is recruitment, where knowledge of the legal industry, and a network of contacts, is a major plus. Before taking steps, you must decide what it is you wish to do long term, and then plan how to make it happen.

Christopher Aukland is regional director of Michael Page and Page Personnel in Hong Kong. Michael Page and Page Personnel are part of PageGroup, one of the world's leading recruitment companies, with operations in 164 offices in 34 countries worldwide.



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Steps into corporate finance

After completing my engineering studies, I joined a knowledge process outsourcing (KPO) consultancy where my role was to assist the market analytics team for a Big Four firm. I'm interested in getting into corporate finance and wonder whether a CFA would be helpful in making the move. Currently, I'm pursuing an MBA in finance. *Rahul*



Corporate finance is one of the most desirable career paths for many graduates and young people seeking to work in financial services. But there are steps that will make a move more likely.

Qualifications are key. Ideally, you will have studied a technical subject in a directly related area at college, such as accounting and finance or economics. If not, you need to look at ways of augmenting your existing qualifications by taking exams. The CFA is the most widely recognised, and while time-consuming and certainly a lot of work, it is specifically designed for a job in the investment banking or management process. Alternatively, you could consider a part- or full-time master in finance or MBA. These will also help give you the technical skills for a move into corporate finance. The fact you have taken the time to achieve the qualifications will show an employer that you are committed to making the move.

In terms of work experience, a technical role for an accounting firm or in a role in a corporate requiring strong

financial analysis is the best foundations. The role must contain a high level of rigorous financial analysis, and this means looking at company accounts, forecasts, and valuations. This could be in a bank, as an adviser, in an accounting firm or within a corporate, most likely the finance or strategy and planning department. As core technical skills are the backbone of the job, several years of technical analysis is essential.

Andrew Oliver is a co-founder of Profile Search & Selection and has worked in Hong Kong for over 14 years



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