

Negotiating in East Asia

Following the launch event of its new Hong Kong office, hosted by the British Consulate, Scotwork has both re-connected with past customers, and picked up over 40 new leads.



FAST FACTS

Company: Scotwork

Country: UK

Industry: Education & training

Website: www.scotwork.com

Training and consulting company Scotwork was the brainchild of John McMillan. He found that there was a gap in the market for effective negotiating skills training. So, in 1976 he devised the first training programme and set up Scotwork to bring it to the business community.

Since then, Scotwork has continued to develop and refine skills of negotiation, drawing on the experience of its negotiation tutorial team and feedback from its participants.

“Negotiation is a skill that can be learned,” says Bill Chan, Joint Managing Director of Scotwork in East Asia. “Our training courses give people the techniques and behaviours that they need to be able to negotiate with greater fluency and ability. We only employ experienced negotiators who deliver a programme that includes practical and tactical advice. By engaging in mock negotiations based on live examples, participants are able to improve their existing ability,

reinforcing what they do well and rectifying what they don’t.”

International expansion

Today, Scotwork is the largest independent specialist in its field, with a network of consultants in 31 offices around the world, delivering courses in 17 languages. The company’s clients include Coca Cola, Michelin, Johnson & Johnson and many other Fortune 500 companies.

Over the last 20 years, Scotwork has seen a strong demand for its training in Hong Kong, Singapore and Australia. In early 2009, as business grew in East Asia, the company set about establishing an office in Hong Kong.

“We decided to focus our efforts on Hong Kong for several reasons,” says Andy Man, Joint Managing Director of Scotwork in East Asia. “The taxation and legislative systems are compatible with the UK, and there is a solid foundation of Intellectual Property (IP) protection here, which is crucial to protect the

Scotwork concept. Hong Kong also offers freedom of capital flow in and out of the territory and the access into East Asia region we want to target, including China, Taiwan, Japan and Korea.”

Launch support

Scotwork contacted UK Trade & Investment in the UK in March 2009, to see what help was available with the new venture. The UK team contacted their colleagues in Hong Kong, and shortly after Scotwork commissioned an Overseas Market Introduction Service (OMIS) report, to find out what would be required to set up in Hong Kong, and how to shape the launch of the new office to attract local businesses.

“Holding our launch event at the British Consulate did a lot for our credibility”

The Consulate General in Hong Kong helped Scotwork to organise a reception at the Consulate itself, identifying potential invitees from across various industry sectors including advertising, banking/finance, energy, ICT and government.

“Holding our launch event at the British Consulate did a lot for our credibility,” says Bill. “The invitation showed the logo of the Consulate General as well as our company logo, and the premises themselves are more prestigious than a hotel. The local business community was clearly impressed by this partnership, and sent along senior level representatives to meet us. The message of the evening was very powerful and guests remembered the event afterwards, making it easier for us to secure further meetings. In fact, we are now working our way through over 40 meetings, with existing and new clients.”

Advice to others

Scotwork currently has two employees kick-starting its Hong Kong operation, and has plans to hire more as the business expands.

With the experience and client base it has built up in Hong Kong over the past decades, the company already knows the market and is well placed to make the most of opportunities as they arise. Even so, Bill and Andy advise companies looking to pursue business in the region to make the most of all available resources, including those that UK Trade & Investment is able to provide.

“It’s vital to do your homework before investing in a new market,” says Andy. “Whatever your product or service, it must be marketable in Hong Kong, otherwise you are just wasting your time. We highly recommend leveraging the governmental strength and business connections of UK Trade & Investment and using the services they offer, such as OMIS. They can help you to announce your presence in a new market, and link with leading players. Their help and support is invaluable.”

Helping you to do business abroad

Doing business in another country can be a challenge, so it’s good to know that UK Trade & Investment is there to help you succeed.

Through a range of unique services, including participation at selected trade fairs, overseas missions and providing bespoke market intelligence, UK Trade & Investment can help you crack foreign markets and quickly get to grips with regulations and business practices overseas.

Through our Passport to Export programme we offer new and inexperienced exporters:

- free capability assessments
- support in visiting potential markets
- mentoring from a local export professional
- free action plans
- customised and subsidised training
- ongoing support once you’re up and running

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The UK and Hong Kong

Hong Kong and the UK are close trading partners. UK exports of goods to Hong Kong in 2008 amounted to £3.9 billion, making it the UK’s 17th largest export market. As well as being a major market on its own right, Hong Kong serves as a trading gateway to Mainland China.

Hundreds of British companies have offices in Hong Kong, with over 300 of those running their Asia-Pacific regional operations from the region.

The City of London is virtually replicated in Hong Kong, with British bankers, insurers, lawyers, consultants, etc at the core.

In addition, many major UK retailers have opened stores in Hong Kong in the last few years, including Marks & Spencer, HMV, Next and Prêt à Manger.

For further information about business opportunities in Hong Kong, please go to www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk



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For further information please visit www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk

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