

A conversation with Philip Morel of T.A. Cook Consultants

Philip Morel, managing partner of T.A. Cook Consultants, believes the development of global accounts requires strong relationships with clients based on mutual trust — a relationship in which clients know the company will deliver what it has promised.

BIC Magazine recently visited with Morel to learn more about T.A. Cook Consultants' business plan for expansion into Asia.

Q: What is the biggest news in T.A. Cook Consultants right now?

A: As of December, the board has decided to go ahead with our business plan for expansion into Asia. We have already been working in China with some of our international European clients, and our plan is to accelerate that process. We have established a limited company in Hong Kong and a wholly owned foreign enterprise in Shanghai to serve both local companies and our global clients in that region. As managing partner for Asia, I will lead the group's activities there.

Q: What led to your position at your company?

A: I've worked in consulting for more than 25 years now — across a number of continents and with a wide range of different cultures — where I have managed all aspects of the value chain. Obviously, that has helped with both the setting up of global accounts and preparing for our current expansion.

Q: What is the most important part of your position?

A: Ensuring client satisfaction is a key aspect of my role and it is certainly fundamental to the success T.A. Cook Consultants has enjoyed around the world. The development of global accounts requires we build strong relationships with our clients based on mutual trust — a relationship in which our clients know we will deliver what we have promised. It means being realistic about ambitious objectives and being upfront — being able to say “we don't do that” when their requirements do not fit our skills and competences.

Another vital aspect is also being able to count on our team. As we are change management specialists, our consultants must be credible if they are to challenge and coach our

clients and their teams, regardless of the level of management we are working with. So my time is spent equally among business development, identification of the client's position, and supporting and coaching teams.

Q: What are your goals for your position?

A: Our plan is to establish a long-term, sustainable business in Asia. The registration of a wholly owned foreign enterprise is certainly a commitment to the long term. In order to hit the ground running, we are already recruiting and training our team as well as developing our alliance with a local firm operating in our sector. I will also be moving my family out to Asia over the coming months so obviously I have a personal interest in our success there as well!

Q: How do you plan to address changes in the work force in the coming year?

A: Most of our clients operate globally and, as such, they need to adapt, develop and grow in order to survive. Improving the quality of their assets is a given and our



Philip Morel
Managing Partner
T.A. Cook Consultants

mission is to help them do that. Any additional support or offering we bring to our clients needs to be linked with our vision: the delivery of tangible operational and financial improvements and benefits.

In order to respond to the market and the client's needs, we sometimes need to recruit new talent who need to have a quite specific skill set. They need to have successful behavior change experience as well as robust knowledge of the processes we implement so they can challenge the client's as-is situation and bring them new perspectives. Such a combination isn't always easy to find. ●

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