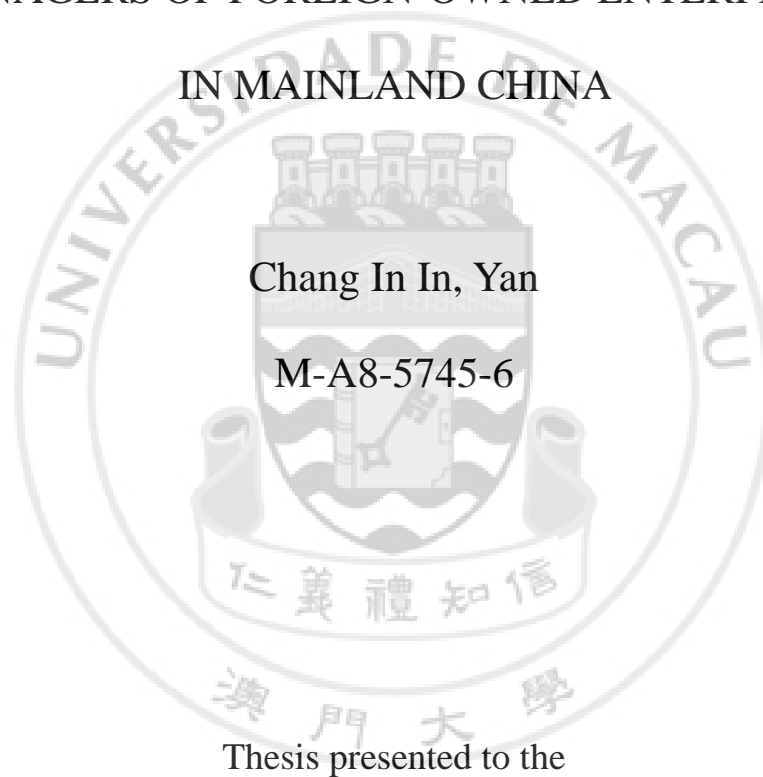


UNIVERSITY OF MACAU
FACULTY OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

A STUDY OF CORE COMPETENCES OF EFFECTIVE
MANAGERS OF FOREIGN-OWNED ENTERPRISES
IN MAINLAND CHINA



Faculty of Business Administration

University of Macau

In partial fulfillment for granting the MBA Degree

2012

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I faced a lot of difficulties during the last two years while I was writing this thesis. Undoubtedly, I could not be able to finish it without my distinguished supervisor, Professor Kong Siew Huat. I would like to express my gratitude to him for his guidance and support for my thesis.

In addition, I would like to thank the support of the effective managers who contributed valuable time and insights for this thesis. Especially they were all willing to be interviewed during weekends by a stranger without any return. I learnt a lot from their sharing of working experience.

Besides, I would also like to express my appreciation to my MBA classmates, colleagues and my friends for their kind support and comments during this period.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my mother because she spared me time in writing this thesis by taking care of my two young kids. And also, thanks to my dearest husband for his understanding and encouragement, particularly during my pregnant period.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the core competences of effective managers in several selected wholly foreign-owned enterprises in China. Specifically, this study attempted to answer four main questions: 1) who the effective managers are and their backgrounds, 2) what they do, 3) what competences they demonstrate and 4) how they obtain their competences.

To fulfill the objective stated above, in-depth, individual, face-to-face interviews involving 35 open-ended questions were conducted. The interviewees were identified by a personal contact, and additional recommendations were provided by the managers who attended the interviews. The collected data were then analyzed by the triangulation method.

All of the interviewed managers are between 31 and 40 years old. They have been working for 7 to 16 years, including 5 to 16 years of working experience in foreign-owned enterprises. All of them had a bachelor's degree or above and started to work in junior positions in their firms immediately after completing their university educations. After approximately 4 to 9 years of working experience in foreign-owned enterprises, most were promoted to managerial positions.

The main responsibilities of the interviewed managers included planning, directing, organizing, leading, recruiting, communicating, delegating, motivating and

controlling. Their main managerial functions matched both the basic managerial functions introduced by Fayol (1949) and the staffing functions introduced by Wehrich (1990). At the same time, the various roles introduced by Mintzberg (1973), which consisted of interpersonal roles (figurehead, leader, liaison), informational roles (monitor, disseminator, spokesperson) and decisional roles (entrepreneur, disturbance handlers, resource allocator and negotiator), were also performed by the managers in this study.

With respect to the different interrelated elements of the competences obtained by those managers, first, two types of knowledge are essential for their daily work: technical or professional knowledge of their own industry and knowledge of management, including industry-specific knowledge. Second, effective managers also possess various useful skills, such as coaching skills, communication skills, negotiation skills, and leadership skills. Third, positive attitudes, such as thinking positively, being proactive, being professional, respecting others, being helpful/supportive, being open-minded, being humble, and maintaining a sense of humor distinguished the effective managers from their less effective counterparts.

Most of the managers stated that their competences were developed through their own working experience instead of through the direct assistance of their previous or current superiors. Based on their tasks, job characteristics and how they developed

their competences, the effective managers in this study are very similar to the effective managers found in the existing literature.



TABLE OF CONTENT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	i
ABSTRACT.....	ii
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	5
2.1 Definition of Management.....	5
2.2 Definition of Manager.....	7
2.3 Tasks, Functions, Style and Roles of Managers in General, and of the Managers in China.....	7
2.4 Manager in China.....	19
2.5 Effective Manager.....	20
2.6 Effective Chinese Manager.....	22
2.7 Executive Development in China.....	23
2.8 Competences.....	24
2.9 Wholly Foreign-owned Enterprise.....	32
2.10 Effective Manager – Foreign and Chinese - in Wholly Foreign-owned Enterprise in China.....	34
2.11 Other Enterprises in China.....	36
2.12 Effective Manager in Other Enterprises in China.....	39
2.13 A Comparison of 2.10 and 2.12.....	40
3. METHODOLOGY.....	42
3.1 Data Collection.....	42
3.2 Selection of Interviewees.....	43
3.3 Interview Questions.....	45
3.4 Interview Medium, Location and Duration.....	46

3.5 Data Analysis.....	47
4. FINDINGS.....	50
4.1 The Effective Managers in the Wholly Foreign-owned Enterprises in China.....	52
4.2 Job Nature of the Effective Managers.....	54
4.3 The Competences of the Effective Managers.....	69
4.4 Self-perceived Achievements of Effective Managers.....	88
4.5 Career Planning of Effective Managers.....	90
4.6 Perception of Effective Managers in Other Type of Enterprises in China.....	91
4.7 Advices to Aspiring Managers.....	96
4.8 Education Background and Past Working Experience of Effective Managers.....	98
5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION.....	105
5.1 Job Responsibilities of the Managers.....	106
5.2 Characteristics of Effective Managers.....	109
5.3 Competences Development of the Managers.....	112
5.4 Conclusion.....	113
5.5 Limitation and Future Research.....	114
REFERENCES.....	116
APPENDIX.....	121