Who Is the Fairest of Them All? Choosing a Leader at Deronde International

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1. Case Analysis I

Yang Jianguo’s promotion as the Senior Vice President of global product development is well deserved. Having headed the Chinese division of Deronde International with distinction, his appointment to this international role is promising as well as challenging. By the end of his first few weeks in the new role, he is already frustrated and confused by the mixed signals he is receiving from his colleagues. Nobody wants to listen to him, his ideas are not considered as are not relevant for French members, despite the fact that he knows better the Asian market.
1. Case Analysis II
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It seems that Jianguo has not prepared himself to get acclimatized with the French corporate culture. While all business corporations share the same goal of boosting bottom lines and building an enduring brand image, the local culture does affect the way the business is run. Deronde International, being headquartered in Paris, seems to function in a style typical of the city and its people, whereby free flow of ideas and spontaneity are encouraged. This seems to have disconcerted Jianguo, who is used to his own style of operating. Having spent most of his working years in mainland China, he seems to have assimilated an autocratic mode of analysis and decision making, which is at odds with the French way.
1. Case Analysis III

Jianguo and Alain have different ideas. Jianguo wants to develop the Asian market, and Alain wants to create a link between east and west culture. But it’s not why Jianguo has been hired. Jianguo is following his culture’s norms by avoiding direct communication about Alain’s contradictions, it is hard for him to understand the meetings because of the other subjects that are attended at them besides of the main subject discussion by the French team.

Jianguo is considered as marginal and unsophisticated, but it’s not in his culture. For him, the main objective is to make the best performance in his job; to be more efficient but the French people takes more time.

In this regard, as Elise had advised him, he can try and make a few compromises in the initial stages. Once his mettle is proven and his skills are recognized by his peers, he can articulate his views more emphatically.

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1. Case Analysis IV

The core team in Paris can also do its share to make things easy for Jianguo. First, the Chief Executive Officer Alain has to specify to his new appointee a clear set of roles and responsibilities. The core management team headed by Alain seem to be of the understanding that new products have to be Franco-centric, meaning that they should represent French culture and style in essence. Jianguo can make others see that French tastes and sensibilities do not always apply to other markets, especially in emerging economies such as South America, China and India. While Jianguo has a valid point to make, he needs to exercise patience in getting his message across. He should also be a little tolerant of the internal politics in the organization involving Yves, Elaine and others.
1. Case Analysis V

Communicating with the core team and convincing them of his ideas is crucial. In his early days as SVP Jianguo has not been assertive enough. This is especially true with respect to Alain, who as the CEO of Deronde, has a say in all decisions. Previously, as the head of Chinese operations, Jianguo was allowed to be his own man, where he had the freedom to think and act independently. But here in Paris, not only is the work culture different, but his independence is also limited. Based on what is given in the case study, Jianguo has not yet come to grips with the limitations imposed by his new role. It is only when he comprehends the new reality that he can truly become the global leader he aspires to become.

Toward the end of the case study, it is implied that Jianguo is already a little regretful of accepting this position and is thinking of other career possibilities. But thinking on these lines should be avoided. Jianguo should see the opportunities that his current adversity is presenting. By overcoming challenges facing him right now, he will learn many things about leading a global enterprise. To the contrary, by settling for a well-treaded and comfortable path, he will undermine his career growth. While Jianguo certainly has the potential to make the transition from a regional star to a global leader, its attainment lies in his own hands.