

## **Avoiding the Opportunity Costs Associated with Picking the Wrong Leader**

Recently, we received a request from a world leading industrial product manufacturer. We've been serving them for over 3 years now, mainly in the area of senior leader selection. This company is a US\$1billion company with multiple business units. During the past 10 years this company has successfully maintained an averaged 20% annual growth rate, with increased contribution outside the United States. Given its fast expansion, identifying and developing the right leader in time is always a challenge.

The position of Greater China GM covers mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, and has to support the five major business units operating at these locations. John, the candidate for this position, used to lead the China operation for a European multinational company in a similar industry sector. Although he looks like a perfect match on the paper, we took a look at John's Hogan Personality Assessment profile and found that it inspired some critical questions.

Besides being driven, results-focused, skilled at big-picture thinking, attuned to opportunity, having good people skills, and being very experienced in handling complexity in a matrix organization, there are still some potential risk areas to which we have to alert the client:

- John is not very detail-oriented. In the past, he has relied on a full functioning team during most of his past management experiences, which was reflected in his Hogan results. However, this organization is very lean, and its fast speed and hard drive on results requires every leader, even those at the top to look closely at data. Otherwise it is very likely John would be challenged by others.
- He has high drive, but at the same time his Hogan results indicate he requires an equal amount of recognition, if not more. This position will be directly reporting to the head of the Asia Pacific region, based in Singapore, and it is not likely the two would meet more than three times a year. Limited recognition and a lack of instant feedback may generate some stress later on.
- The Hogan results show John is relationship focused; however this company culture is very aggressive and confrontational. Thus he would need to prepare for managing a team and working with boss and colleagues of this character

After issuing our report, the organization decided to extend the Greater China GM job offer to John. By supporting our in-house assessment center with the Hogan Personality Assessment results, we were able to help prepare him for some likely challenges he would face in the coming days, and also help him adjust his immediate expectations. In addition, John found the results personally insightful, as they facilitated a better understanding of his deeper needs and therefore allowed him the opportunity to become more effective at handling potential stresses.