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Each week we publish an extract from a book that is topical or of general interest.

New Asian Emperors The Business Strategies of the Overseas Chinese By George T. Haley, Usha C.V. Haley and Tan Chin Tiong John Wiley & Sons (Asia) (2009)

The book shows why overseas Chinese companies continue to dominate South-east Asia and have extended their reach in East Asia, despite the Asian financial crisis and Sars in the past decade.

Excerpt

Kwek Leng Beng, who took over the Hong Leong Group from his father, said: 'I have seen both the old man's

style and Western-style management. The latter is bogged down by many layers of the decision-making process.

'Consequently, you lose speed, and as a result, you also lose the deal. For example, it took us just 48 hours to tender for Grand Hyatt Taipei. You can say I have incorporated into my management style and business approach the best of both worlds.'

Their vaunted speed of decision and action flows from their decision-making style, a core competency of the overseas Chinese...When asked about their greatest competitive advantage, many of the overseas Chinese will also mention speed.

Stan Shih, chairman and founder of computer group Acer, told us: 'We believe in doing things quickly' and 'We implement and change things quickly. It's all implementation in the marketplace.'

Both Western and overseas Chinese decision-making styles accept the existence of uncertainty and try to minimise it. However, Western strategic decision making depends heavily on quantifiable and measurable data. Western managers often become stymied when they confront environments that do not generate the data they require and to which they have become accustomed, delaying strategic decisions for many Western companies.

The overseas Chinese managers can arrive quickly at strategic decisions with minimum information, primarily through the use of subjective data, speeding decisions for their company.

The book is available at major bookstores at \$35.26, inclusive of GST

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