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管理百忌(上)

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PREFACE

Qin Mu

This book consists of a hundred essays about the author's experience in business management. Before submitting the manuscript to the printer, the author has called upon me to write a few words by way of a preface.

A literary worker by profession, I have never moved within the orbit of business management. Why, then, am I chosen for the job? The simple reason is that the author is an ardent lover of literature while I, for my part, am deeply interested in improved business management in China. Contrary to the familiar Chinese saying that "Different fields of work are set apart by a chasm as big as a mountain", the basic workings of things underlying various fields of human endeavour are in fact often similar. It is with this assumption that I am now gallantly responding to the task.

The author of the book is General Manager of the Hainan Hongkong-Macao International Trust & Investment Co. Ltd., a state-owned non-banking finance company officially approved and licensed by the People's Bank of China and registered with the Hainan Provincial Administrative Bureau for Industrial and Commercial Activities. This finance company is full of innovative daring, going all out to constantly upgrade its level of management, with the result that its financial returns have been spectacularly increased. Last year's estimate has put all its assets at over RMB500,000,000 in value with an annual profit exceeding RMB10,000,000 and a per capita average contribution of RMB 800,000 to the profits tax. These statistics show that this company is head and shoulders above others in the industry. Undoubtedly, it would carry a considerable amount of conviction for the general manager of such a firm to dwell upon business management.

I have met this gentleman and am favourably impressed by what he has got to say. According to him, the essays collected in this book were mostly written during stopovers or in transit when he travelled. They were printed bit by bit, in the first place, for the in-house consumption among staff members. A busy executive taking out time discussing matters of common interest with his subordinates and making it a regular practice is in itself proof enough of the steadily improved performance of the firm that he heads.

A glance at the titles of the essays and one gets to know what the book is all about. Among them, for instance, are "Taboo of Being a Perfectionist", "Taboo of All Good News and No Bad News", "Taboo of Gauging a Person's Calibre by a Single Success or Failure", "Taboo of Planting a Tree in the Morning and Sawing its Trunk for Timber by Evening", "Taboo of Reluctance to Employ Too Many Corporate Talents", "Taboo of One-man Show", "Taboo of Dismissing Employees Summarily without Inculcating Them First", "Taboo of Always Aiming Too High", "Taboo of Fraudulent Business behaviour", "Taboo of

Seeking Minor Gains to the Detriment of Major Interests", "Taboo of Arrogance and Finickiness", "Taboo of Going Absolutely Egalitarian", and "Taboo of Plunging in with Sound and Fury but Ending Up in an Anticlimax". Such titles are self-evident and the morals embodied in them, although all common sense, would have prevented many a businessman from tripping and tumbling on his thorny path had he heeded and acted upon them. Abundantly quoted sage adages and wise folk saying help hammer the author's point home. I quote:

From the point of view of governing by the law instead of by the person, a truly successful firm is one where top performance is maintained even when the general manager is absent. Business management attains a high degree of maturity only when a business remains totally unaffected by the personnel shift at the top.

Among China's numerous large- and mediumsize enterprises a number of them are vigorously forging ahead to seek cost-effectiveness. But there is no denying the fact, I am afraid, that a greater number of them show aging enervation and low cost-effectiveness, with some of them going into the red for years running. To find out where the crux of the problem lies and how to improve extensively the cost-effectiveness of state-owned enterprises has become, as it were, the centre of attention. China's reform is a massive undertaking involving a multitude of problems to be solved. All these problems, however, boil down to one of how to get rid of the bad and uphold the good. This does not only bear immediately on people's livelihood and finances but will also ultimately affect the future of China. Many corporate giants in the foreign countries, even though they operate smoothly and with efficiency, would spare no effort on continued improvement of performance. With an open mind, they would draw on others' experience for enlightenment, even delving into such ancient Chinese tomes as Sun Tzu, The Story of the Three Kingdoms, and Caigentan (literally Rambling Notes about Vegetable Roots). We really should pause to think and learn from these indefatigable alien learners. We really should learn whatever is useful in a theory or experience, be it a tiny atom, in an all-embracing approach, an approach Mr Lu Xun described as "a combination of what is Chinese and what is overseas, of what is time-honoured and what is modern". It is my belief that we can benefit immensely from picking out a model sample of enterprises and firms, condensing and distilling their respective experience, commending them for it and trying to render it widely applicable. In this sense, books like the present A Hundred Taboos for a Manager are note-worthy. In a country such as China, useful experience of an individual enterprise or firm does not only apply there. Instead, through a process of absorption and assimilation, it should be shared by the entire nation.

Hopefully, these few words would pass for a preface, humble as they are.

序

秦牧

這是一本關於企業管理經驗方面的書籍,付印 之前,它的作者邀我給寫一篇序言。

我是個文學工作者,和企業經營可以說原本 "搭不上邊",何以卻來寫這篇序言呢?原因是: 本書的作者也是一位文學愛好者,而且,我對中國 企業經營管理的改進也頗為關注。再說,許多行 業,並非"隔行如隔山",其中許多事理,常可息 息相通。唯其如此,我才敢於和願意執筆寫這篇序 言。

本書作者是海南港澳國際信託投資有限公司的 總經理。這家公司是經中國人民銀行批准,頒發 《經營金融業務許可證》的全民性質的非銀行金融 機構,並經海南省工商行政管理局註冊登記。這家 公司鋭意進取,經營管理水平不斷提高,經濟效益 十分顯著,為海南以至國內外行家所矚目。去年公 司的資產規模超過人民幣5億元,年利潤逾1000 萬元,人均創利稅80萬元,應該說是同類行業的 佼佼者。唯其如此,它的總經理現身說法,出來講 述企業管理的經驗,也就順理成章具有一定的說服 力。

我和這位總經理見過面,聽他的談吐,是很有 見地的。他說這些文章大抵寫於旅次倥偬的片刻閒 暇或者候機室中,原是逐節發表於公司的內部刊物 裏和公司同仁切磋的。一個企業總經理能夠不斷這 樣做,也為他們企業的經營何以蒸蒸日上作了一個 注腳。

 法治而非人治的觀念來看,一個企業的真正成功, 應是總經理不在其位也能保證企業高效運轉。從這 個意義講,企業不因領導人的更迭而發生變化,便 是企業管理進人高度法制的表現。"就是很令人稱 賞的。

我國眾多的大中型企業, 朝氣蓬勃, 效益顯著 的自然所在多有,但是暮氣沉沉,利潤低微,以至 連年虧損的毋寧說數量更大。如何找出癥結所在. 普遍提高國營企業效益的問題,可以說已經成為全 國矚目的焦點之一。談到改革,雖說是經緯萬端, 但是概括地講,也不外是"除弊興利"四個字面 已。這事情牽涉重大,不僅關係到人們生活、財政 狀況, 甚至在終極意義上, 將決定國家的前途。外 國許多大企業儘管運轉得很好,仍然千方百計地尋 求改進之道。他們找經驗、找啟示、甚至找到我國 的古籍《孫子兵法》、《三國演義》、《菜根譚》 等等書籍上頭去。這類事情是很值得我們深長思之 的。某一項學說,某一種經驗只要有點滴可取之 虑,就决不放過。學習的方法正如魯迅先生所説的 是"中外占今法"。我想,在改變我國許多人、中 型企業落後形象的征途中,選擇一批優秀企業,概 括他們的經驗,提煉昇華,弘揚光大,應該也是重 要門道之一。從這個意義看來,像《管理百忌》這 類書籍的出版,就很值得注意了。在我們國家,一 個企業的寶貴經驗,並不該僅僅應用於該企業而 已,還應該批判吸收,使它成為全民的精神財富才 對。

謹以這麼一篇小文, 聊充書中序言。

1991年底於廣州

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