



Participants of EUCCK Busan HR round table

# Leadership in Uncertain Times

The EUCCK Busan Office organized its 2<sup>nd</sup> HR Round-Table event on the topic ‘Leadership in uncertain times’ on June 11<sup>th</sup>.

Many participants attended and actively participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> HR Round-Table event, which addressed all CEOs, CFOs and HR Directors of local and foreign companies in Korea. The keynote speaker at the meeting was Mr. Thomas Schurch, Director of Swiss-ASIA Ltd.

As the executive in charge, whether as CEO, CFO or HR Director, strong leadership (decision making, to be visionary, cost controlling, empowerment, change management, integrity, team-building, transfer leadership into the organization, positive thinking, professional communication, etc.) are just a small number of needed tasks to apply for successful operation in current uncertain times.

Mr. Schurch structured the HR Round-Table

meeting into 3 sub-topics relating to the topic. When first revealing “what makes a good leader in uncertain times”, participants very actively provided and shared their opinions. Participants agreed that for example to be calm, to make decisions fast



but based on comprehensive data, to communicate professionally at all times or to be the visionary with positive thinking attitude are key-elements for good leadership in uncertain times. In addition, trust, honesty about company's situation and future plans as well as overall integrity will lead to acceptance and respect from employees, head-quarter, suppliers and customers.

All participants were positive that within the next few months, economic recovery will slowly set-in again. A good leader therefore does not just cut costs under panic and reorganizes with a short-term perspective. Participants were clear that a good Leader makes decisions based on thorough market-studies and professional potential-assessments of existing employees.

This as well helps with regard to budget freezes ordered by headquarter. The local CEO / CFO or HR Director in Korea has to "protect" the interests of the Korean branch and its employees and has to influence headquarter decisions by providing fundamental data and rational arguments with a mid- and long-term view.

A good leader also makes efforts to retain key-personnel and high-potentials by providing specific trainings and vision for career development within the organization. During the last 3-5 years, most companies made good profits and there was less

time for training and people development. Participants agreed that now is the time to focus on these issues more carefully. Again, when recovery set-in again, those employees will be desperately needed. They will appreciate company's efforts towards them even in these uncertain times.

Mr. Schurch then asked the question; "how can the local CEO support leaders". Participants agreed that providing clear messages even when under pressure is Key. In addition, delegation to direct-reports has to be fully adapted to their capabilities and potential. A good leader focuses on monitoring each progress / task constantly and takes immediate action when needed. It appeared in certain cases that even senior employees lost their commitment towards the company due to rumors and overall rather negative information on a daily basis. The local CEO therefore should be keen to constantly support progresses and interact in those times.

The final issue raised by Mr. Schurch was; "how can HR support local CEO". It became clear that the local CEOs expect from their HR department to support identifying high-potentials and the potential in employees on all levels. In these uncertain times, HR shall as well support positive communication, open-door policy, good relations with union representatives and ensure HR policies as per legal framework.

