



*Dr. Xiang Bing, Founding
Dean of Cheung Kong
Graduate School of Business*

CHINA'S BUSINESS SCHOOL LEADER

Kate Bulkley talks to Dr. Xiang Bing, Founder and Dean of the Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business, about its development and China's business prospects

You would expect Dr. Xiang Bing to be bullish on China. The man who has headed China's leading business school Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business (CKGSB) since its founding ten years ago, is also a realist about China's strengths and weaknesses and he has a disarming ability to articulate each with both candour and humour.

So while many in the West complain about China's sometimes heavy-handed regulation, Bing points out that many sectors are "wide open" to competition, offering vast opportunities for both Chinese and foreign companies as China's growing economy continues to



Dr. Xiang Bing Career Chronology

1994	Founding Faculty of China Europe International Business School in Shanghai
1999	Founds EMBA at Guanghua School of Management, Peking University
2002	Founds CKGSB
2006	Launches CKGSB CEO Programme
2010/2011	Opens Offices in New York, Hong Kong and London



outpace more beleaguered ones in the West.

“Every variant of capitalism is at play in China, making China the United Nations of capitalism,” says Bing brightly when I meet him recently for a chat in the London offices of CKGSB. “We have US companies like Cisco doing well and Korean companies like Samsung who do well, so China is globalised already. Sure, there are certain sectors like education, media and telecommunications that have a heavy regulation but in many others China is more open than other advanced economies.”

A trained accountant who also teaches accounting classes at CKGSB, Bing sees big potential for both Chinese and foreign companies, especially as Chinese firms take on a more global view and adapt to international standards in both commerce and accounting. “I tell the students you need to forget about being a Chinese company and that you are Chinese. The future is you have to learn how to leverage resources globally in order to compete.”

The rising demand for executive MBAs from C-suite executives at privately-owned companies in China is far outstripping demand from state-owned enterprises for traditional MBAs, says Bing. This is another sign, he explains, that growth in China is being driven not by state-owned companies but by Chinese entrepreneurs. “The Chinese are

really good at entrepreneurialism. Maybe we are not so good at innovation, but entrepreneurialism is a Chinese game and I’m positive about China’s future because of that.”

Bing admits that the protection of intellectual property will have to improve for innovation to become a key driver of the Chinese economy, but this will come because China is such an important market for many foreign companies. “Companies need to send their best people, their best technology, their best brands and their best abilities to innovate into China because in order for these companies to survive they must be in the

and managerial problems of SOEs,” admits Bing. “The real success of China is that the private sector has survived many kinds of discriminations. Only 12 years ago the private sector had no access to banking credit and no trading rights. So China has come a long way.”

To meet rising demand for business education, Bing has big plans that include the doubling of CKGSB’s faculty over the next five years to 80 full-time professors. The faculty are also being encouraged to publish original research on Chinese companies and business trends, something that Bing says

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Chinese market,” says Bing. Warming to his topic, he slaps his hand on his knee and adds: “China will become the US very shortly. Like you have to be in the US to be a global company, you will have to be in China.”

Bing’s optimism about China’s business prospects is tempered by his acknowledgement of the “strong element of state capitalism” and the “significant role” of state-controlled enterprises (SOEs) in the Chinese economy. “We know the limitations of a planned economy and we know all the potential governance

CKGSB can do better because some 20 per cent of China’s top private companies are run by CKGSB alumni giving the school unprecedented access to data.

“We have gone beyond just writing case studies which is really just the tree in the forest,” says Bing. “We have a structured way of looking at the whole economy and we also look at the future of China... We don’t want to just import knowledge West to East. We want to export knowledge. It’s what I call two-way traffic.” **F**

Kate Bulkley is a London-based business journalist who specialises in covering media, telecoms and technology.
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