

IACMR Business Meeting
At the Academy of Management Meeting 2007
Philadelphia

5pm – 7pm, Aug 4, 2007
Room 103A, Pennsylvania Convention Center

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Current President Professor Xiaoping Chen gave a five-minute status report on the history and growth of IACMR. She introduced executive committee members who were present at the meeting. Then Past President Professor Anne Tsui introduced our journal (Management and Organization Research, MOR) and encouraged the audience to submit their work to MOR. She then reported on the dissertation workshop we had in July, 2007 in Guangzhou at Sun Yet San University. The workshop was a great success according to Professor Tsui.

Next representative-at-large (Americas) Professor Catherine Levitt reported on her progress with the mentorship program. She mentioned that there existed mismatching expectations on the mentor and the mentee side. Cathy encouraged the audience to contact her if they are or those they know are interested in becoming a mentor. Treasurer/Secretary Eva Yao reported the current balances IACMR has in both the US and China accounts and encouraged the audience to become a paid-member.

Randy Wang, a visiting Ph.D. student at the University of Washington, reported progress he made regarding website improvement. Randy helped migrated the discussion forum to a better platform, which has seen a great number of exchanges among our members.

One of the IACMR 2008 program co-chairs Professor Jia Lin Xie reported progress made toward the reviewing process of the English program. After that, Professor Renhong Zhu from Sun Yet San University reported the current status of the 2008 conference logistics in Guangzhou.

Lastly, our representative-at-large (Europe) Professor Ingmar Bjorman reported progress on the PDW and workshops for the IACMR 2008 conference. He also commented briefly about officer election for the coming months and encouraged the audience to nominate those they think are suitable candidates.

After the reports from IACMR officers, Professor Catherine Levitt gave an introduction for the invited speaker for this year's meeting: Mr. Michael Foley, director of sales at UPS (United Parcel Service), who came in for Mr. David Abney, COO of UPS, who could not attend our meeting. Professor Levitt talked about how UPS had organized focus groups in Los Angeles to get to know the culture and business environment better before they explored their China market.

Mr. Foley first gave a brief overview of UPS' history in China and his involvement in building a local sales team in Shanghai. He was charged with the responsibility of building a young sales team from scratch. Mr. Foley received a day's training on

expatriation before he landed in Shanghai and he felt that he learned much about management in a cross-cultural setting. He summarized several things from his experience. Mr. Foley felt that communication was a big challenge in his daily interaction with the local employees. He and the local employees would perceive each other's verbal and non-verbal communication in totally opposite ways. When he thought he was being direct and effective, his Chinese employees thought he was arrogant and intrusive. While his employees thought they were courteous and respectful, he thought they were fearful and evasive. Mr. Foley also learned that long-term relationships don't break easily and that he would need to read more into people's feedbacks (e.g., "Yes" does not necessarily mean yes). While dealing with these obstacles in an unfamiliar cultural environment, Mr. Foley said it was also very difficult being away from his family and food he was used to.

Despite the initial roadblocks Mr. Foley encountered in his assignment, he was able to build a committed and efficient team. He spoke highly of the motivation and work ethics of his Chinese employees. Mr. Foley mentioned that in order to retain these local talents, UPS has adjusted their incentive plans and offered stock option plans to their employees. They tried hard to communicate frequently with these employees to make sure that they understand the opportunities they have with the company. The performance metrics UPS used with their Chinese employees were similar to those used in the US.

The audience listened to Mr. Foley with great interest and asked a number of questions afterwards.