

Asia Pacific HR Newsletter

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In the last few weeks, we have just started to feel initial signs of a hiring slow-down for senior HR positions in the developed markets of Singapore and Hong Kong, being led by some conservatism in the banking sector. It's too early to tell whether this will creep into other industries or locations. Notable, the healthcare and consumer sectors are looking particularly resilient across Asia. With some groups of multinationals, we are seeing some non-essential requisitions being put on hold, and we are experiencing more protracted decision-making with existing HR search requirements - the same symptoms that we felt in the lead-up to the last slow-down in 2008. However, we are also confident that critical-to-fill HR positions will remain on the agenda, regardless of any economic worries. In 2008, the global downturn was less acutely felt in Asia, and HR leaders needed to be in a strong position to help forge the growth agenda on the other side of the curve. Hence the expectations for strong HR leaders to deal with the twin challenges of change and growth will only continue in the future.

China, India, Japan and Indonesia remain very strong markets for HR hiring at present, each for different reasons. With China, we have been quite surprised by the speed that senior regional HR roles are being moved there. There have been many 'false starts' with this trend in the past, but we are finally starting to see some traction. Some of these roles were previously in Singapore and Hong Kong, and others are new roles, where HR leaders in China now have direct reporting lines into global decision-makers rather than via the regional line. Meanwhile, the enlargement of HR roles in India and Indonesia is stemming from the continued growth of the economies in those domestic markets, which in itself is spurred on by the steady increase in the number of 'middle-class' consumers. Unlike China, however, there are fewer regional roles being created in these markets.

With Japan, we are seeing two trends that are having fascinating repercussions for HR heads at multinational firms. Firstly, multinationals were (in general) less exposed to the effects of the tsunami and the ongoing nuclear crisis in Japan than their domestic competitors. Some international companies have therefore been able to mobilise their global supply chains and workforces quicker than their often monolithic Japanese competitors. Those multinationals have been able to increase market share in Japan to an extent that would have been impossible in normal circumstances. And secondly, both the immediate and the ongoing effects of the earthquake have allowed some multinationals to finally gain the management consensus to tackle some of the 'sacred cows' within their Japanese organisations. With normal operations and decision-making processes hampered, the strongest HR Directors gained credibility for being able to improvise in order to help protect business continuity. There is now an increased call to tackle further organisational blockages that have been historically holding back growth and development in these companies. With both these trends we are seeing an increased need for strong HR leadership to help capitalise on the opportunities in the market, while at the same time also help Japan to revitalise an economy that's been stagnating for a number of years.

On the global scale, we continue to witness a migration of senior Asian HR talent back to Asia from Europe and the US. The immediate opportunities 'back home' are both compelling and lucrative, and this is creating a headache for some Global HR Leaders in retaining international Asian assignees. A second trend is the continued interest of European and American HR talent to be in Asia. Indeed many of those in Asia plan to stay and are converting onto local contracts. The only market that's bucking this trend is Australia: the inflow of Australian HR talent into Asia has slowed dramatically in 2011 on the back of the strong economy in Australia as well as the strength of the Aussie Dollar.

In the last few months, we have held HR leadership sessions in Singapore, the UK, and Japan. And for the remainder of 2011 we have the following HR Leadership events coming up (not including our regular series of events in Singapore): Jakarta (26 Jul), Beijing (28 Jul), Hong Kong (30 Aug), Seoul (5-6 Sep), Tokyo (7-9 Sep), Delhi/Gurgaon (12 Sep), Bangalore (13 Sep), Mumbai (14-15 Sep), Shanghai (19-21 Sep), London (11 Oct), Hong Kong (10-11 Nov), Melbourne (8 Dec) and Sydney (9 Dec). Details of these have and will be forwarded to our HR friends in these locations

The Chapman Consulting Group last month also welcomed Stefanie Cross-Wilson as its new International President based in Los Angeles. Stefanie is helping Global HR Heads build their HR leadership teams in Asia Pacific. She also acts as a key liaison point for Asian HR talent currently outside of Asia, and international HR talent in Asia who will eventually return 'home' to markets like the US or Europe. For more details see our press release: [Stefanie Cross-Wilson joins The Chapman Consulting Group as International President \(pdf\)](#)

Click [here](#) for more thought leadership articles added since our last newsletter, or follow the links to our latest ones below:

- [The "Asianisation" of Global HR Leadership \(pdf\)](#)
- [Attracting Talent in China](#)
- [Regional HR Leaders Meet in Singapore to Discuss MNCs Shifting Power from West to East \(pdf\)](#)
- [Global HR Leaders Meet in London to Discuss Growth in Emerging Markets \(pdf\)](#)
- [Japan Talent Heads Meet to Discuss Leadership in the Japanese Context \(pdf\)](#)
- [HR's Ongoing Contribution to Business Continuity in Post-Tsunami Japan – Part 2 \(pdf\)](#)
- [What Makes Good HR Managers into Great HR Leaders in Japan? \(pdf\)](#)
- [HR's Ongoing Contribution to Business Continuity in Post-Tsunami Japan – Part 1 \(pdf\)](#)

Click [here](#) to review our regularly-updated HR Q&A forum, which in this edition includes the following mix of contributions:

- [How is Australian HR talent viewed throughout the region?](#)
- [You've performed many HR searches in Japan. What's unique about doing searches here?](#)
- [How seriously is HR being taken as a 'real' profession to university graduates in Singapore?](#)
- [Is HR operations looked upon as the unglamorous part of the HR profession?](#)
- [Do I require a visa in Singapore before I can be considered for an HR position in the country?](#)
- [What are the challenges of a regional HR role based out Australia?](#)
- [I'm in HK but I'm keen to gain experience in China. How easy is it to make the move?](#)

Click [here](#) to browse a sample of the recent searches we have been conducting, or follow the links in the selection below:

- Singapore

- Upcoming: [Asia Talent Acquisition Lead \(1009/TCCG\)](#), based in Singapore
- Interviewing: [Talent Development Director, APAC \(1007/TCCG\)](#), based in Singapore
- Interviewing: [Regional HR Leader, APAC \(992/TCCG\)](#), based in Singapore
- Shortlisting: [Regional HR Director, Asia Pacific \(604/TCCG\)](#), based in Singapore
- Shortlisting: [Regional Talent Management Lead \(571/TCCG\)](#), based in Singapore
- Shortlisting: [SG Head of Human Capital Management \(772/TCCG\)](#), based in Singapore
- Finalising: [Group HR President \(833/TCCG\)](#), based in Singapore
- Interviewing: [HR Products Lead \(707/TCCG\)](#), based in Singapore
- Shortlisting: [Executive Vice President of HR \(805/TCCG\)](#), based in Singapore
- Shortlisting: [Regional Vice President HR APAC \(827/TCCG\)](#), based in Singapore
- Finalising: [Regional Head of HR \(828/TCCG\)](#), based in Singapore
- Interviewing: [HR Director, ASEAN \(966/TCCG\)](#), based in Singapore
- Interviewing: [Director of Employee Relations, SEA \(964/TCCG\)](#), based in Singapore
- Shortlisting: [SEA Head of Shared Services \(842/TCCG\)](#), based in Singapore
- Interviewing: [HR Director, Singapore \(936/TCCG\)](#), based in Singapore

- China

- Shortlisting: [HR Regional Lead, Greater China \(1002/TCCG\)](#), based in Shanghai
- Upcoming: [Regional Head Learning & Development \(1018/TCCG\)](#), based in Shanghai
- Upcoming: [Head of HR China \(766/TCCG\)](#), based in Shanghai
- Upcoming: [Greater China HR Director, Shanghai \(981/TCCG\)](#), based in Shanghai
- Shortlisting: [Senior VP of HR, China \(844/TCCG\)](#), based in Shanghai
- Interviewing: [APAC HR Head, Luxury Brand \(959/TCCG\)](#), based in Tokyo or Shanghai

- Hong Kong

- Upcoming: [North Asia HR Leader \(994/TCCG\)](#), based in Hong Kong
- Interviewing: [Regional HR Director, Greater China \(943/TCCG\)](#), based in Hong Kong
- Shortlisting: [Talent Acquisition Leader, APAC \(956/TCCG\)](#), based in Hong Kong

- Japan

- Upcoming: [Japan Country Senior Manager of HR \(1010/TCCG\)](#), based in Tokyo
- Upcoming: [Senior Director of Staffing, Japan \(1008/TCCG\)](#), based in Tokyo
- Shortlisting: [HR Manager for Japan/Korea \(1011/TCCG\)](#), based in Tokyo
- Interviewing: [Japan HR Head: HR Transformation \(998/TCCG\)](#), based in Tokyo
- Shortlisting: [Japan HR Leader: Operational Excellence \(988/TCCG\)](#), based in Tokyo

- Korea

- Shortlisting: [Newly Created Role – Korea HR Director \(1016/TCCG\)](#), based in Seoul
- Upcoming: [Korea Head of Human Resources \(968/TCCG\)](#), based in Seoul
- Shortlisting: [Global Head of C&B: Korean Chaebol \(976/TCCG\)](#), based in Seoul

- International

- Upcoming: [SVP of HR, North America \(1006/TCCG\)](#), based in the U.S.
- Finalising: [Global C&B Lead \(666/TCCG\)](#), based in Europe

- Other

- Finalising: [Head of C&B Consulting, Indonesia \(970/TCCG\)](#), based in Jakarta
- Finalising: [Country Head of HR, Malaysia \(984/TCCG\)](#), based in Kuala Lumpur
- Shortlisting: [Regional Head of Learning \(946/TCCG\)](#), based in Kuala Lumpur
- Shortlisting: [Regional Change Lead \(927/TCCG\)](#), based in Kuala Lumpur
- Finalising: [HR Leader, Thailand \(967/TCCG\)](#), based in Bangkok

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About Us

The Chapman Consulting Group is an executive search firm dedicated to the Human Resources profession across the Asia Pacific Japan (APJ) region. Headquartered in Singapore, we enjoy strong links to the global and regional headquarters of many of the world's top multinational companies, where we partner directly with both business leaders and HR Heads. Working flexibly across geographical borders to source world-class local and international HR talent, we help build Human Resources leadership teams across 14 countries and across all industry sectors.