

## Professor Hau L LEE

Citation

Logistics is a key industry in Hong Kong. In a city of commerce like Hong Kong, the movement of goods and services is just as vital as the movement of people. As the logistical hub in south China, we ignore Professor Lee Hau Leung and his work at our own peril. He is widely recognized as the world leader in the study of supply chain management. We would do well to listen to and learn from him. But today we are primarily here to honour him.

Prof Lee is in fact one of us. He was Hong Kong-born, Hong Kong-bred and half Hong Kong-educated. He obtained a Bachelor of Social Sciences degree in economics and statistics from the University of Hong Kong, going on to broaden his international perspectives with a Master of Science degree in Operational Research from the London School of Economics, culminating with a doctorate in the same discipline from the prestigious Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. He is now Thoma Professor of Operations, Information and Technology at Stanford University. Academic degrees and responsibilities, however, do not tell half the story of who he is and what he does that is so important. In logistics, he is big, toweringly big.

No ordinary ivory tower academic, Prof Lee is the founder and director of the Stanford Global Supply Chain Management Forum, an industry-academic consortium dedicated to advancing the theory and practice of supply chain management and global logistics system design. His specialties include inventory planning, manufacturing

strategy, and the use of wireless technology in logistics. His writings have been widely published in learned journals such as Management Science, Operations Research, Harvard Business Review, European Journal of Operational Research, Naval Research Logistics and Sloan Management Research etc. He was the past editor-in-chief of Management Science and has served on the editorial boards of many prestigious related academic and industry journals.

His theoretical insights and breakthroughs have been validated by consultancy work for such multinational giants as Hewlett-Packard, Sun Microsystems, Apple Computer, General Motors, Accenture, Lucent Technologies, and Eli Lilly & Company. In fact, he has consulted extensively worldwide with private and public sector establishments, including many in Hong Kong. He is also on the board and advisory board of several international logistics and supply chain software companies. Across Europe, Asia and America, many executives have benefited from training workshops he conducted on supply chain management and global logistics.

His name will forever be linked with the so-called “Bull Whip Effect”, a concept he popularized which describes how the seemingly minor acts of a trading partner can create significant information distortions along the supply chain. In response, he has proposed a range of management solutions such as eProcurement, Vendor-Managed Inventory, Cross-Enterprise Integration and Total Supply Chain Visibility to offset the Bull Whip

Effect. Valued for his lateral-thinking abilities, Prof Lee does not address the symptoms of a supply chain problem with a quick fix. He always goes to the root of the problem, prescribing solutions that result in sustainable performance improvement. That explains why he is such a sought-after problem-solver and high-powered consultant.

Prof Lee is the recipient of numerous awards for his important contributions. He was awarded the Harold Lardner Prize for International Distinction in Operations Research from the Canadian Operations Research Society in 2003. He was elected a Fellow of the Institute of Management Science and Operations Research in 2005 and Fellow of the Manufacturing and Service Operations Management Society in 2001. He is currently the President of the Production and Operations Management Society. His article entitled “The Triple-A Supply Chain” won second place in the Mckinsey Award for Best Paper in the Harvard Business Review in 2004.

Prof Lee’s high-impact work takes logistical management and operational efficiency to a new level, thereby enhancing customer satisfaction and reliability in the managing the flow of goods and services. It lies at the heart of a successful modern global business operation. He is casting a long shadow on the logistics industry and beyond. His reputation and stature in this part of the world are sure to grow with the unleashing of explosive economic energies on the mainland. Today, we welcome home Hong Kong’s native son who has made good. Today we celebrate his relentless inventiveness and crucial contributions to one of our pivotal industries. By honoring Prof Lee today, we are also paying tribute to the vital role of logistics in modern business operations. He makes growth more likely for our businesses, and in so doing, he ensures our economic prosperity.

Mr Pro-Chancellor, I have the honour to present to you, on behalf of the University, Prof Lee Hau Leung, Thoma Professor of Operations, Information and Technology at Stanford University and Director of the Stanford Global Supply Chain Management Forum, for the degree of Doctor of Engineering *honoris causa*.