



Philip Ho's Formula for

MOVING FORWARD

打造金漆招牌三十年

Philip Ho started Forward Signs with his brother in the mid-1980's soon after he moved to Canada with his family. Philip was by no means an expert in the sign-making industry. In fact, before immigration, Philip worked in the logistics field. Yet, the business was quite successful as he developed a passion for the industry. Under the Ho brothers' leadership, Forward Signs expanded from a 2,400-square foot workshop to a 10,000-square foot factory within six years. In 2010, it further expanded to its current 50,000-square foot compound in Scarborough. The company had literally grown 20 times in its warehouse capability!

有云：「人靠衣装，佛要金装。」做生意最重要是有一个金漆招牌。Forward Signs就是贺明国 ho 经营三十年建立起来的金漆招牌。尽管公司没有中文名称，但谈起Forward Signs，没有人不知道是他与弟弟贺孝华合作经营的公司，专做各类指示牌、招牌及广告牌等。

The "potential back-up" eventually got the job

As Vice President, Philip is charged with the business growth of Forward Signs. Among many instances of Philip's determination and grit, there was one notable encounter that had lasting effect on the company. In this instance, there was company that Philip cold called for over two years, receiving no response. One day, with the help of a business associate, Philip had a chance to connect with the right person at the prospective business. The manager unenthusiastically agreed to meet him. He told Philip that he was 100% satisfied with the existing suppliers and did not understand why Philip would not give up on him. However, Philip did not cave under the pressure. He simply calmly said, "I could be your potential back-up." Those two words touched the hot-spot of the senior manager, as it reduced his risk factor. Forward Signs was finally awarded a job contract.



外行努力变内行

用成功的移民企业家来形容贺明国，绝对没有夸张。贺明国于上世纪八十年代中期举家移民加拿大，本身是物流业出身的他，移居后没有重操故业，而是与弟弟合作搞招牌制作生意。虽然贺明国完全是外行，但他很快便掌握了这个行业的专业知识，并且可以说爱上这行业，没打算再重新投入物流行业了。

贺明国对这行业的爱，可说是恒久持续的。他对公司业务的情，称得上真挚浓厚。约三年后，他终于有机会约见一家大企业的建设部主管，向他展示Forward Signs 的实力，希望争取这家企业的招牌工程合约。但那主管盛气凌人，走进会议室对贺明国劈头第一个问题是：「我对我目前的招牌供应商百分百满意，我为何要加你公司入我的供应商行列？为何你这两年来总是不肯放弃打电话给我推销你公司？」

面对这样一位推销对象，相信普通的推销员便会不知所措地拿起公事包便告辞。可贺明国面上一丝难色也没有，并且很从容不迫的回答：「那我可以是你有潜力的后援啊！」好一句「有潜力的后援」，令到会议室内本来紧张冷酷的气氛，立即缓和下来。建设部主管马上很高兴的与贺明国交谈起来。贺明国的努力最终没有白费，Forward Signs最后获得机会竞投这家企业的项目，并成功取得他们的工作订单。



“Potential back-up” are the two words that helped Philip win the business he had been pursuing for more than two years. These two words were simple, but were forceful enough to show Philip’s passion and persistence.

Never become complacent

In Philip’s opinion, complacency is the biggest common mistake of an established business. Perhaps that’s why the brothers use the word “Forward” in the name of the company. “I remember when we were a start-up. There was an established sign-maker who told us we that we were too small to compete with them,” said Philip. In the end, Forward Signs kept growing, blazing past all competition. “Without forward-thinking innovation, you will not grow,” explained Philip.

After passion and persistence, Philip would rate Innovation as the third most crucial factor in Forward Signs’ success. Philip prioritizes upgrading with the latest technology and materials in the market. He also invests in state-of-the-art equipment. When Forward Signs was shortlisted as one of the final two bidders of the stringent LCBO signs supplier procurement process, it was the site visit that finally made the LCBO executives pick Forward Signs.



热爱工作+坚持+创新=成功

这张订单是贺明国凭他对工作的热爱与坚持赚取得来的。那家企业其实是与他公司有多年业务来往的银行。他不断的致电建设部主管，希望能约见他推销自己公司的实力，可惜都是碰一鼻子灰。直至有一天他终于透过一位生意上的朋友帮忙联系，最后才有机会与这位主管见面。幸亏他经验丰富，面对这样一位严苛的未来客户，也能不慌不忙的应对自如，建立良好关系，为日后的合作铺平道路。

除了热爱工作，有坚持不屈精神之外，贺明国另一个成功的重要因素是创新。也许是贺氏兄弟明白做生意不进则退的道理，连公司名称都是提醒自己争取进步，改名「前进招牌」(其实Forward Signs中文名称原本是英艺招牌，但后来决定不用中文名称，希望主流社会不会受到公司由华人经营而有种先入为主的错觉，以为是没有实力的小型族裔公司)。一向抱著求新意念的贺明国，不断更新公司的生产机器，招牌物料亦与时俱进。走进Forward Signs的厂房，所见的设备都是先进一流的，物料都是符合现代社会对环境的要求和能源的规格的，没半点落伍的痕迹。

承包制造酒管局招牌

就是因为贺明国对设备和物料的要求，只要客户去到他的厂房一看，都会很放心将订单交给他，最经典的例子是争取安大略省酒品管理局的生意。酒管局是安省政府的生意，垄断所有在安省出售的酒品生意，业务遍布安省所有城市小镇。由于有一批设于商场内的酒管局店舖需要作定时翻新，酒管局于是招标寻觅招牌供应商，Forward Signs是其中一家参与投标的公司。经过一年多的筛选程序，最后只剩下Forward Signs 和另一家公司。酒管局需要派员到这两家公司实地视察后才能作最后决定。拥有五万平方呎厂房，具备各种制作招牌的先进设备及熟练技工的Forward Signs，结果是最后的中标者。





Passion + Persistence + Innovation = Success

At the age of 68, one would consider slowing down. However, Philip is still working very hard to acquire new business. He sticks to his tried and true formula for business success: Passion + Persistence + Innovation = Success. Philip also believes that expansion inspires its staff members. "When the employees see the opportunities, they will work hard. This is important to the business growth," says Philip. This brilliant strategy will not only keep the company growing, but also retains staff. As Philip puts it, a company is not only about making profits, but it is also responsible for the well-being of those who work there.

Forward Signs成立初时，厂房只有2400平方呎，六年后，厂房扩大至一万平方呎。然而这厂房仍然未能满足公司的业务需求，至2010年，公司迁入面积达五万平方呎的现址。用厂房面积简单计算一下，Forward Signs增长了20倍有多，但实际业务的增长，远超过这个增幅。

我为人人，人人为我

经营了公司30年的贺明国，今年年届68，本应享受退休清福，但贺明国对这份工作的热爱令他不想退休，而且他还有一个使命，就是要为公司的员工不断寻找机会。他说：「只要有生意，员工便会见到机会，自然会努力工作，公司的业务亦顺理成章有所增长。」有这种我为人人，人人为我的老板，难怪即使是大学毕业的年轻人，也甘愿由安装招牌的技术工做起，因他所见到的，是这家公司有发展潜力，感到自己将来有晋升机会，甚至进入公司的管理层。

有梦想便有动力，不进则退，要贺明国停下步来，似乎不是他那杯茶。



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We are your most reliable business
partner and solutions provider for:

- * Signage * Energy savings retrofit
- * Decorative metal structures



Shops at Don Mills -
Glass Panel Pylon Sign



Piaget - Channel Letter



October's Very Own - Halo Effect Channel Logo



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