



Tool 33-1. Cultural, Philosophical, and Ideological Influences on Chinese CEOs' Thinking

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Based on Chapter 33, “Chinese ‘Sheng Yi’: Reinterpreting Challenges for Leaders” in *The ASTD Leadership Handbook*, edited by Elaine Biech, © 2010 ASTD

Purpose: Use this chart to compare the philosophy and ideology of major Chinese thought systems.

Cultural, Philosophical, and Ideological Influences on Chinese CEOs' Thinking

	<i>Confucianism</i>	<i>Bing Jia</i>	<i>Daoism</i>	<i>Legalism</i>	<i>Communism</i>	Quantitative Studies
Assumptions	One can cultivate the innate goodness of human beings.	One can achieve maximum results with minimal time and at least cost.	One can balance Yin and Yang (the opposite governing forces in the universe) to achieve social harmony.	"Individuals are evil, and human interactions are focused on exchange relationships."	All historical growth, change, and development results from the struggle of opposites, especially the class struggle.	Survey results can be extrapolated to the sample population—middle-level Chinese business leaders.
Key Principles about Leadership Competencies	Emphasis on the morality of leaders. Leaders should be role models for establishing moral order. Humaneness "involves sympathy and empathy." "Ritualism"; leaders "comply with established social norms" and serve as a "model for the populace." Sense of righteousness and propriety. Wisdom.	The best strategy is to win wars without engaging in physical battle (i.e. to foil an adversary's plot). Self-image, purpose, continuous effort, responsibility, knowledge, achievement-orientation, loyalty.	Emphasis on authenticity of leaders. "Leaders should shun glory and wealth to keep the spirit free." The "doctrine of inaction" discourages leaders from intervening in daily leadership activities. Leaders create a self-leading and self-sustaining organizational culture.	Emphasis on wisdom and its combination with cunning. Leaders should follow three principles: law, tactic, and legitimacy. That is, leaders should use penal law, political technique, and authority to maintain control. Political strategist. Art of rulership. Enlightened despotism behind realpolitik.	Leaders should know and use followers appropriately and gain their trust and confidence. Emphasis on pragmatism and efficiency (e.g. Deng's quotes: "Do not argue"; "Cat theory"; "Practice is the sole criterion for testing truth.") Be creative, upright, and self-disciplined, and have qualities of revolutionaries: youth, knowledge, and expertise.	Effective leaders are morally sound. Attend to organizational performance. Care about subordinates. Efficient in attaining goals. Have interpersonal competence (which encompasses American perceptions of leaders' sensitivity, attractiveness, and charisma.) Versatility. Participative leadership is viewed less positively in China than the United States

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Key Ideas about Leadership Development	Leadership development is a life-long process. Wisdom and maturity develop at a later age. Daily self-reflection as means to continuous improvement. <i>Zhong Yong</i> or golden way: non-extreme ways of leading with morality, wisdom, and mental cultivation.	Leaders should frequently practice principles from <i>The Art of War</i> to foster a good habit of thinking and acting. Proverb: “The more you sweat in peacetime, the less you bleed in war.”	Leaders should develop the ability to use a transcendental way of approaching seemingly antithetical views.	Leaders should learn political technique.	Leaders should have the courage to emancipate their minds. Leaders should be creative. Leaders should think dialectically and have a long-term vision and a big picture view.	NA
Similar Western Theories or Practices	Transformational leadership	Results-based leadership	Authentic leadership	“Self-authoring” leaders through the lens of Kegan’s (1984) constructive-developmental theory	NA	Multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1999) and leadership. Transformational and value-based leadership. Charismatic leadership