

TS' AO YING-WEI, PRESIDENT OF LINKSYS: POSITION YOUR MARKET CLEARLY, AND CREATE A NO.1 BRAND

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Distinguished alumnus, Mr. Ts' ao Ying-wei, President of Linksys Company, was invited to the school and gave a speech at 10:00 a.m. last Wednesday (September 24, 2003), sharing his experience of success with the audience. Ts' ao took "Linksys and I" as his main topic, talking about how he started his own career, which appealed to three hundred people including teachers and students in the Chueh-sheng International Conference Room and Ching-sheng International Conference Room. (The summary of the speech appears one page 2 of Issue 546, Tamkang Times Chinese version.)

After Ts' ao graduated from the Department of Computer Science in TKU in 1975, he studied abroad in America and took two master degrees from the University of Illinois: Master of Computer Science and Master of Business Management. The speech began with the story of how he started his career from a garage fifteen years ago. By explaining his business concepts in managing Linksys, Ts' ao introduced the process of how he made Linksys become a well-known brand in America. He also talked about how he and his wife, Wu Chien, an alumnus of TKU as well, established their own company by their own hands—one company profiting 450 million dollars per year.

Ts' ao emphasized that Linksys succeeded because he had clearly positioned his business in the market—production for SO-HO (small office, home office). He said when he took MBA courses, he wrote many plans about business development, but the funny thing was that he never laid out any scheme for Linksys. He believed that to set a clear market position, with a goal for six months to one year, and then go closely with the trend of the market would be enough for his company.

Ta' so also indicated that teamwork was very important. He stressed that

Linksys was a company without an assembly line, so the team in Taiwan was very important. “If there was no teamwork in Taiwan, there would be no Linksys now,” Ts'ao said. Someone asked him whether the relationship between Linksys and the factories in Taiwan would change after Linksys became the branch company of Cisco, and Ts'ao answered that it would not change because Linksys and the factories in Taiwan had a long-term partnership that have lasted for many years. He also pointed out that procurement would continuously increase next year after he made an over ten-billion-dollar purchase in Taiwan this year. “Now with such a power I can incorporate Taiwan’ s IT Industry to compete with Japan,” Ts'ao said.

Ts'ao commented that Linksys was a company absorbing both eastern culture and western culture—such as forbearance from the East and aggressiveness from the West. He thought that a successful entrepreneur must participate in everything personally, so in his company, no one had a secretary. Everyone kept learning, working hard, and growing with Linksys.

A student from National Taiwan University asked Ts'ao about what the standard was when he employed a person. Ts'ao answered that people he appreciated must be active and earnest, having great desire for knowledge.

“Although the academic degree is important, it is in fact merely a turning point,” Ts'ao said. However, he also thought that the educational background still could guarantee a certain kind of quality. Taking his employees for example, he said that there are three hundred employees in Linksys now, and together they can create 450-million-dollars of profit per year. On average, each employee can create more than 10 million dollars per year—they are really a hand picked group.