



JUST COME TO VIETNAM ONCE...

That is what that Mr. Noboru Kondo, General Director of Brainworks Asia Co., Ltd. (Headquarter is in Tokyo, Japan), often uses to convince his customers when they hesitate coming to Vietnam to seek business opportunities.

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Through projects, plans and works that he has been implementing in Vietnam, it can be said that Mr. Noboru Kondo has been a “bridge” between Japan and Vietnam enterprises.

Embrace new challenges

Brainworks Asia Co., Ltd. has been operating in Vietnam since 1997. Over 11 years ago, Mr. Noboru Kondo, despite having work experience in Thailand, China, Korea, and Taiwan, with the suggestion from a friend, decided to go to a country he knew nothing about, Vietnam, for new and exciting business opportunities. He said to himself that there would be opportunities to develop in a new environment. By now, many people have asked, “How can you be in Vietnam so long?” He laughed with a soft voice and answered “I love Vietnam!”

When talking about Japanese businessmen, he said that Japanese Entrepreneurs often are not confident to invest in new markets or new land that they do not well-understand, especially in an emerging country like Vietnam. Meanwhile, the roles of the consulting firm as “Brainworks” are very important because of the experiences and information that it has. Every time he talks and advises any Japanese entrepreneurs, he usually convinces them by simply saying “just come to Vietnam once”. He shared: “I did not know how to explain to entrepreneurs, but it was true that I first came to Vietnam just to satisfy my curiosity and to explore new business opportunities in an emerging economy, but when I arrived in Vietnam, I have stayed. I feel happy and fulfilled with my work. Up to now, by my persuasion, out of every 10 entrepreneurs that I advise to come to Vietnam, there will be one that loves and stays in Vietnam. And those who come after, look at the results of the previous entrepreneurs, so they know what to expect, and continue to invest in Vietnam.”

Greetings with more smiles

Mr. Noboru Kondo not only does consulting work, shares experiences for Japan businesses that want to come to Vietnam, invests in the fields of information technology, food, culture, agriculture, but he is also a bridge to bring Japanese culture and cuisines to Vietnam. When asked what impressed him about Vietnamese cuisine, he immediately said “wine!”, without any hesitation and then laughed. To further explain, he said “Vietnam’s wine is stronger than

the Sake of Japan.” His frank, open-minded and enthusiastic attitude helps the story between us to become really exciting.

Offering consultancy for many Japanese companies to build a foothold and be successful in Vietnam, Mr. Noboru Kondo has reviewed the business environment in Vietnam is quite good, with reasonable taxes and uncomplicated procedures. One issue is that some Japanese businessmen are not pleased due to their first impression when they land at Tan Son Nhat International Airport. He says that after the long flight from Japan, most everyone wants to feel welcome and get to their hotel, but when they arrive at customs clearance, they often “welcome” visitors with an unfriendly look, work slowly and ask for all kinds of papers. “For the first impression we have about Vietnam, if it is pleasurable, it will make the guests from Japan feel comfortable, but we had an opposing experience” Mr. Kondo said.

With achievements over the years of his company in general, and Mr. Kondo in particular, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan (METI) has entrusted to him and his colleagues to execute the project of “Promotion of Cool Japan Strategy” in order to introduce the culture, people, cuisine, and specialties of Japan to Vietnam. Especially in 2013, Vietnam and Japan will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations and it will be a meaningful event. At the beginning of this strategy, Mr. Noboru Kondo, in the role of a “bridge”, just opened a shop of “Japanese Specialties Exhibition” (in Phu My Hung, District 7, HCMC) with the theme of “Undiscovering Japan” to display featured products from Tokushima province, his native place in particular, and Japan in general such as candies, ramen noodles, other foods and clothes. Currently, the store has sold products from three Japanese companies, and is expected to have about ten other Japanese companies to participate in the future. Meanwhile, unique products of Tokushima province will continue to attract a significant amount of visitors who want to explore the culture and cuisine of Japan in Vietnam. By the end of January 2013, a number of companies including Brainworks, will send a well-known Awa dancer group to perform at an official media event. Mr. Noboru Kondo said: “I hope that all citizens of Tokushima will be directed towards Vietnam.” ☺