



Top quality material is combined with the best craftsmanship and an excellent work environment at the Yongzheng Tailor Shop. 上乘材料、一流手藝、優質工作環境，是永正裁縫店成功之道。

# Tailored to suit

The key to creating outstanding quality is in working in the finest conditions

The ancient Greeks were the first to say that “clothes maketh the man”, meaning that clothes are important to the way people see you. The Chinese have a proverb of their own: “Talent counts 30 per cent; appearance counts 70”.

It is certainly true that first impressions count. In business, it pays to dress for success. One study conducted in Shanghai even suggested that women who wear high quality, well-cut clothing have a higher earning capacity.

It's a philosophy with which Wang Yongzheng, president of Yongzheng Tailor Shop Group, agrees. His clientele bears testament to this. Wang is the head of a huge custom tailoring corporation, dressing the upper echelon of global business. Hundreds of specialist tailors are employed to meet a growing demand in China and overseas. Captains of finance and industry, bankers, diplomats and senior government officials all wear his high-quality Yongzheng brand suits.

Interestingly, Wang notes, it was once the poor people who needed tailors, because they couldn't afford to buy ready-made clothes. Now, it's the opposite. Rich and successful people prefer quality tailoring because they know it will make them stand out from the crowd.

Wang has cut a fine career for himself since opening



his first shop 20 years ago. He has grown the business into a respected global corporation, dressing not only the corporate elite of China, but exporting to growing markets in Europe and the United States. He has achieved this through uncompromising quality and service.

It began when Wang was 20, working for a railway company by day, and making clothes for family and friends after hours. When his father offered him 500 yuan and the choice to either marry or start a business, Wang saw his opportunity.

Even though China was just opening up to foreign investment, and few people owned their own business, Wang decided to put his skills to use. He accepted his father's gift and, with government permission, opened a small tailor shop in Tianjin.

It wasn't always easy. Indeed, Wang faced "many, many difficulties". Government policies regarding privately-owned business were not very well-developed. A lot of people had a biased view of private enterprise, suspecting that companies which were not state-owned could not be legitimate.

It was also a time when most Chinese people wore Mao suits. Despite their unfamiliarity with western-style suiting, they liked the look of it, and were willing to try it.

"Since we were privately owned, not state-owned, we were able to make our suits according to the customers' needs, so my business was quite good," Wang recalls.

His focus was sharp. "When you concentrate on one aim, focus on it your whole life and do it well, you'll definitely become successful," Wang says. "But if you keep on changing your aim and the nature of your business during the process, you might easily fail."

Quality has always been paramount. His employees start out as apprentices, learning from the senior tailors how to polish and strengthen their skills. This valued collaboration is evident in staff loyalty – more than 70 per cent of Wang's 400 to 500 employees have been with the company for more than 10 years. The skills and shared experience of the craftsmen have also become the brand's distinguishing feature.

Wang rewards their loyalty with an outstanding working environment. His factory is creatively designed around a large



and beautiful garden, overlooked by the work stations. Wang wants his workers to see open space and greenery, and to hear the sound of a waterfall. He believes that a relaxed and happy environment will lift the mood of the workers and lead to continual product improvements. "Our employees, corporate culture and working environment have led to the production of exceptional products and a high level of recognition on the mainland," Wang says.

Quality is maintained across all aspects of the enterprise. In the beginning, Wang only had to be skilled at tailoring a suit. Now that his business has become a corporation, it relies on more than just his own skills. The foundation of the company, its employee structure, technical skills, training, development and services are the keys to producing high-quality suits.

Listening to the customer is another priority. This involves giving precise measurements and design instructions to the technical staff, who will first make a paper sample for the customer's approval. The buyer is also offered a final check to "ensure their suit is outstanding".

Wang's success shows that persistence pays. It demonstrates that if you have a clear goal and are prepared to work hard, anything is possible. And surely there can be nothing more satisfying than reaping the rewards of an endeavour.



A tailor works in the lush open space, which even has its own waterfall. 裁縫在戶外工作，四周林木蒼翠，身處其中，心境份外悠然。

## 別出心「裁」

古希臘人最先懂得「人靠衣裝」的道理，中國諺語亦有謂「佛靠金裝，人要衣裝」，說明衣著得體能提升個人形象，而給人的第一印象尤其重要。在商業社會，要成功必先講究行頭。有研究發現，衣著時尚的上海女性，生財能力一般較高。

永正裁縫店集團董事長王永正深明此道，他的顧客亦足以為證。由他主理的裁縫店集團聘用數百名一級裁縫，以滿足國內外對高級訂造服裝的殷切需求。不少工商界或國際機構的高級行政人員、銀行家、外交使節及高級政府官員，均愛穿著永正出品的高級套裝。

王先生談及一個頗有趣的現象，就是以往只有負擔不起購買成衣的人，才會走到裁縫店訂造衣服；時而世易，現在反而成功人士及富有人家喜愛度身訂造服飾，皆因他們明白稱身的衣服更能突出自己。

從20年前建立首家裁縫店到發展至現今的跨國企業，王先生的成功之道在於力求品質及服務完美。集團現時除了為中國國內的商賈賢士置裝之外，成衣更出口至歐美市場。

王先生20歲時，日間於鐵路部門工作，晚上則為親友縫製衣服。一日，他的父親給他500元人民幣，著他一是娶妻，要不便開創事業。即使當時中國才開始接受外國投資，甚少人擁有自己的生意，王永正還是決定靠自己的手藝出外打拼。在接受父親的金錢及得到政府的批准下，王先生於天津開設了一家小裁縫店。

最初，王先生面對很多困難，因當時政府對私人企業還未有一套完善政策，很多人對私人企業存有偏見，懷疑所有非國營企業並不合法。不過，當時正值「毛裝」興起，大部份人雖然對西服剪裁不太了解，但因喜歡「毛裝」的外型，也願意一試。

王先生憶述：「由於小店並非國營而是私人經營，我可以按客人的需要裁製服飾，當時的生意也著實不差。」

他的目標十分清晰，「只要終生朝著一個目標前進，便會成功。但若在經營的過程中對業務的目標搖擺不定，那生意則很容易倒下來。」

王先生一直堅持將品質放在首位。他的裁縫由學徒開始，跟從資深的裁縫學習，鍛鍊手藝。這種合作關係相當有效，由員工對公司的忠誠度，可見一斑。集團現僱用了400至500位員工，當中超過七成已於集團服務超過十年，他們的技藝及經驗可說是集團成名的關鍵。

為了報答這班忠心的員工，王先生為他們提供最佳的工作環境。現代化的工場建於寬闊的園林旁邊，讓員工置身開揚的綠化環境，兼聽到瀑布潺潺的聲音。他相信舒適而愉快的工作環境能

提高員工士氣，對提升產品品質亦大有幫助。他表示，旗下員工的努力加上優良的企業文化及工作環境，使產品的品質傲視同儕，在國內享負盛名。

王先生的企業文化以品質為支柱，創業初期，他只需有裁縫的技能，但時至今日，他的事業已發展為大型企業，除其個人的才能之外，企業基礎、員工架構、技術、培訓及服務質素都是製造高級服裝的關鍵。

懂得聆聽客戶的需要同樣重要，這包括將精確的度身尺寸及設計要求交給技術員，由他們先做紙樣，待客戶滿意後才正式裁剪。衣服製成後客戶亦會作最後檢查，確保衣裝達到最佳品質。

王先生的成就足以證明持之以恆的重要。只要有明確的目標，不畏艱辛，努力工作，萬事可成，還有甚麼比辛勞得來的成果更加可貴？