



Trelleborg reaps benefits of Mandarin training

When Tony Carter, Asia Market Manager for Trelleborg Industrial AVS, found out he was moving to Shanghai for work, learning Mandarin immediately became a priority for him and his family. The Regional Language Network put Tony in touch with Derbyshire-based Elanga International, who devised an intensive training programme to help Tony and his family adjust not only to a new language, but to a different culture and way of life.

Language training can be beneficial to businesses for all sorts of different purposes, from handling telephone and email enquiries from abroad, to negotiating with international partners and suppliers. In no situation is it more important than when an employee is relocating to a foreign country - as Trelleborg's Tony Carter found first hand when he moved to China in 2005 to head up a team of Key Account Managers, Engineers and Marketing staff at Trelleborg Industrial AVS's based at a new trading hub for the Swedish-based global industrial group.

Six months into the China venture, Tony has no doubts that the intensive Mandarin training he undertook before leaving the UK has helped him to make good business progress: "the Mandarin I picked up over the week was enough to break the ice with our Chinese team and this has developed into a good working relationship, which means the work gets done more efficiently".

When dealing with a country like China, not only is the spoken and written language so vastly different. The culture, lifestyle and habits are so unfamiliar that something as everyday as going to the supermarket becomes a daunting prospect. Thus the Carters' language training would be of paramount importance in helping them adjust not only to a different language but also to a new environment and way of life.

Tony Carter had met Regional Language Network (RLN) Manager, Sally Archer, at a China event organised by the Leicestershire-Sichuan Trade Bureau. Once his move to Shanghai had been confirmed, he contacted the RLN for help with locating language trainers. The RLN team searched BLIS Professionals – the online database of experts in international communications – in search of a Mandarin trainer. After contacting several providers to ensure they were able to provide training in Mandarin, they sent a shortlist to Trelleborg.

From the shortlist, the company selected Elanga International, a specialist provider of language training and finalist at the 2005 East Midlands International Business Communications Awards. Managing Director Elaine Walker visited Trelleborg's UK headquarters in Leicester to meet Tony and agree upon the best training plan to suit his and his family's needs: an intensive Mandarin language course, delivered over a one-week period to Tony, wife Julie and 14-year-old son, Matt.

Together with expert trainer Ablimit Baki, Elaine visited Tony's house each day and the intensive training ran from 9:30am to 4:30pm. The training was lively and fast paced, and varied enough to hold the attention of Matt, for whom GCSE French had

'left a bad taste in my mouth'. In fact, Tony now reports that 'Matt is really enjoying the life in Shanghai and is currently doing a GSCE in Mandarin at an international school in the city. Matt claims to not miss anything about the UK except for a good Indian curry and his mates. He is already making plans to stay on and go to another country to do his degree!'

<p>Contacts</p> <p>Trelleborg www.trelleborg.com</p> <p>Elanga International www.elanga.com</p>	<p>Regional Language Network East Midlands helps East Midlands companies access more international trade opportunities by breaking down language and cultural barriers. The RLN offers a central point of contact for information and support on international communications, and provides valuable commercial information through events, newsletters and briefings. Robins Wood House, Robins Wood Road, Aspley, Nottingham, NG8 3NH. Tel: 0115 854 1399 www.rln-eastmidlands.com</p> <p>BLIS Services is a one-stop shop for language and cultural expertise, and offers a free, quality-assured database of translators, interpreters, language trainers and cultural consultants in your area. www.blis.org.uk</p>
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